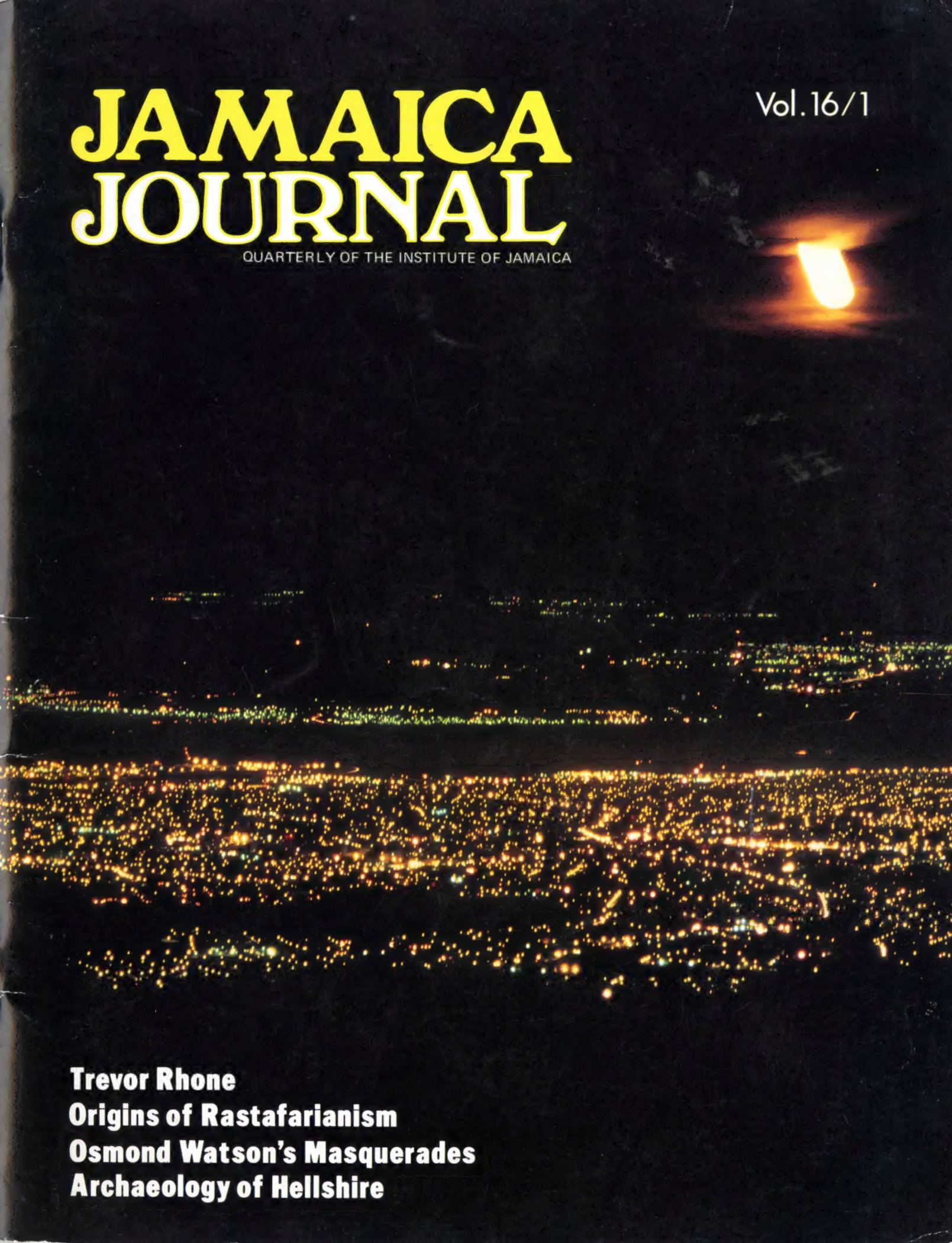


JAMAICA JOURNAL

QUARTERLY OF THE INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

Vol. 16/1



Trevor Rhone
Origins of Rastafarianism
Osmond Watson's Masquerades
Archaeology of Hellshire

Treasures of Jamaican Heritage



Monkey Jar

Jamaican Peoples Museum, Spanish Town
Institute of Jamaica

Traditionally used for storing, cooling, and carrying water. Jamaica's Monkey Jar is made in the syncretic ceramic tradition, i.e. it combines African and European ceramic features. Date of commencement of the tradition is uncertain: archaeological evidence suggests 1750-1800. However, the Monkey Jar could have been introduced from other areas; it is also found in Barbados and in North Carolina, U.S.A.



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Moon over Kingston, temporary headquarters of the International Seabed Authority. Photograph taken from the St. Andrew Hills.

Colour transparency by Andreas Oberli.

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Mervyn Morris Interviews Trevor Rhone

In two interviews conducted
over a 22-month period

[Friday 24 October 1980]

MM: Trevor, where were you born and when?

TR: I was born in Kingston; under the clock, I think, as they say. It was like one of those quick trips into town, be born, and out again. Bellas Gate, a little place in St Catherine, is really what I'd say, from I was a couple days old until I was in my teens, was home. Bellas Gate, St Catherine. And I was born 24th March, 1940.

How large a family were you born into?

I'm the twenty-first child of my parents. My father, actually, was married twice, and I think had some children in between marriages. My mother, his second wife, has three children — three boys — and I'm the third. And I'm actually the last of 21.

Where were you educated?

Primary education was at a little school in St Catherine, a place called Red Ground, briefly, then at Barton's Primary, in St Catherine, for quite a long while. Brief spell at Ginger Ridge Primary, again in St Catherine. In fact, I never went to the school in the district that I grew up in, strangely enough. And then it was on to Beckford and Smith's, now St Jago, from 1952 until 1957, I think it was. And then on to the Rose Bruford College of Speech and Drama in Lamorbey Park in Sidcup, Kent, in England.

Why did you decide to go and study drama?

People always ask this question, and I've never been able to give the answer that satisfies. Before I had seen a play in fact, I knew pretty much what my life's work should be: how I wanted to spend my days, in other words. It was a thing that happened when I was about nine. In the little district that I lived in they had these concerts where you paid a shilling to take off a man and sixpence to put him back up. I think that must have had a profound effect on my mind. So that stayed with me, and when I went to school — Beckford and Smith's — I got heavily involved with the Schools' Drama Festival and then into the pantomime — you know, the yearly pantomime — and round about that time (sixteen, seventeen, eighteen) I started thinking seriously — much against the odds, you know, at that time — of going off to study some place, and met Edric Connor, the Trinidadian actor, and he

suggested the Rose Bruford College in England, but said to me, very clearly, "Whatever they teach you, forget half of it" — which I've managed to do.

But there are some aspects of what you learned that are still very helpful. Is it possible for you to identify one or two of these things which you learned at Drama School which you have found have been of lasting use?

Oh yes. The English Drama School, and particularly the one I went to — their technical knowledge of the theatre is absolutely first-rate. They *know*. And in a way the conditions that prevail in England are very similar to the conditions here: very little money; it's a lot of making do, in fact, and re-using things, being able to convert things, to do with the minimum, at the same time allowing your mind to maximize itself for usage. While in America there's so much money, usually, and these sort of very splendid theatres and everything is all technology. That's an important thing about England: stagecraft itself, I think, is first-rate — you know, the ability to use the stage. History of the theatre — you know, from the very very beginning — and the development of the theatre is also something which they taught you and taught you very well. And the use of the body, in fact — the mime, the fencing, very valid things. The Voice and Speech was helpful, apart from the fact that they insisted that you speak like them — which was a bit of a tragedy. And I think the worst aspect of it all was the fact that they denied — one was forced to deny — one's roots and saying it wasn't important. All that there was for them, and should be for you, was *their* roots, the Chaucer and the Shakespeare coming up the line. That, I think, was the real hazard of the place: that they tried to make you into somebody that you were not, and make you into what *they* were.

Were you, at the time that you were at Drama School in England, already beginning to think of becoming a writer as distinct from a man of the theatre who was an actor, primarily, and also a director?

No, no. In England one had two choices. I wanted to become an actor. There's nothing more in the world that I wanted to do than act and act and act and act. One also had to do a teaching course, one had to do both. And all my intentions, in fact, were set on the stage:



The young playwright — Trevor Rhone at the start of his career.

desperately, really wanted to, thought of nothing else but acting. Directing was an additional thing, a sort of vague avenue that one could explore, but the thing to do was to act. You were taught, you know, some directing principles; but very few people in the college actually took it on seriously — acting was the thing. Came back to Jamaica and really was trying to carry out that vision of myself.

In what year did you come back to Jamaica?

Went to England in 1960. Came back in 1963. It was a very traumatic time, in fact; because when I came back I started teaching, because there was very little else one could do at that time, and in fact my salary was half what my tuition had cost. And the whole climate was really sort of very desert-like in terms of activity. You know, having left the sort of metropolis where there were theatres and plays, to come back here and be literally scrounging around . . . So I fled from Jamaica after nine months and went back to England. Found it even more distressing in fact when I went back, because there were all these theatres and I was playing the little black boy who ran away with the little white girl — which distressed me totally because I didn't have that intention at all!

Where in England did you go to when you went back? Was it London?

Yes, I went to London . . . As I say, the work really was propagating a sort of image which didn't make me feel good about myself. And so I fled, again, back to Jamaica. It was a sort of routine: every couple of months I was doing that. And here I made a very conscious sort of choice. I really sat down and said, look, I really am a part of the society. Unconsciously or subconsciously I took Mr Connor's word about forgetting half of what you had learned. And here was just about when . . . I used to take the bus at that time . . . and I remember spending a lot of time at Cross Roads. I used to spend an hour or two there a day waiting for the bus. And the first thing I wrote was that little poem called "Look Two", which was just repeating the sounds that I'd heard, and the thing sounded so damn good and went down so well that I . . . But I really never thought about any furtherance in terms of writing.

In what year was "Look Two", Trevor?

"Look Two" was 1967. In fact, the writing thing came about quite by accident in many ways. Before I went to college, England, and I was here, I remember now spending a lot of Saturdays and Sundays at the university (where I used to be a clerk) around a typewriter, writing a play, it was a radio play. Because at that time JBC had just started and there was this whole advent of radio drama with Robin Midgely and people like that. And I wrote one of those. And I also wrote a couple of other plays which I still have. So in fact the writing thing was emerging long before I had gone to drama school, but it had died a sort of death. And it really resurfaced when I was teaching at St Andrew Technical and the gentleman said to me he needs a pantomime, for Christmas. So, okay, I go to the library and I find the usual things — "Puss in Boots", "Cinderella", "Jack and the Beanstalk" — and I take it back, and the children looked at it and looked away from it.

So I said to the gentleman, the headmaster, "Sir, I think I know what would interest these children, but I can not find it."

And he said to me, "Mr Rhone, if you know what it is, why don't you write it down?"

I said, "Fine. We should start rehearsals next week and I don't have the script. But if I could have a week off from school, I think I can write this thing down."

So I simply took a week off from classes — I sat at my desk at school, and there was a young miss there from the typing department, and as I finished a page I gave it to her and she typed it. And by the end of the week, without even reading the damn thing over, we were in rehearsals. And that thing was "Cinderella" — I used the title and the basic theme and set it in our area. And that thing really earned so much money and was such a pleasure, both for me and the children. But it was something one had to do at that time. You know, one did it, and one went back to teaching. And the second year I wrote another one. And the third year I also wrote another one. And it was becoming something that was expected of me: Mr Rhone writes the pantomime, you know, every year. And, oh yes, I was like doing two schools, and doing two productions, you know, writing one and maybe writing both sometimes.

What was the other school?

KC. And I think Queens as well. So I was really harassing myself tremendously. And then what happened was, I think, one day I was at KC and I looked across at this old man — and this is reflected in *School's Out*, right? — and I saw reflections of myself, Mervyn, twenty-five years from now. And I said to myself, "Boy!" Oh yes, I was twenty-nine. — When one is twenty-one it's glorious, right? Twenty-nine, and you haven't realized your dreams or are even beginning to realize your dreams, you begin to panic. And I think I panicked a little bit; panicked a lot. And somehow I managed to opt out of school — resigned, because of ill health or something. My mind, in fact, I think, was playing tricks on me. And I went home and looked through my window that Monday morning, and all my W.A.S.P. habits and indoctrination really took hold of me when I looked through and saw everybody streaming to work on a Monday morning, and me sitting here with these blank sheets of paper because I said I was going to write. And it panicked me, it was really a very frightening experience at the time. But there was a certain sense of determination within myself, and I stuck it out and I wrote the play and I put it on and it worked very well. And for me it was very satisfying. That was the play *The Gadget*.

Do you remember what year that was?

That, I think, was '69, '68-69, that happened. Yes, because I was twenty-

nine. That was the period. But the really sort of important step I made was when I wrote *Smile Orange*. Because there's always been the quandary and problem, the dilemma in my mind as to what language to write in, right? Because here I was, I spoke the English language fairly well, I had lived in England, nearly all my theatrical experiences were expressed in that sort of standard type English language, and my vowel sounds were all perfect and what-not and what-not and what-not . . . And I thought to myself that if I wished to reach an international audience *that* is the language. But then I thought to myself that my roots and my background doesn't express itself in that language. And I said I have to make a choice. I remember the day sitting in my room and really agonizing about it: whom do I write for? And I said to myself: okay, I know who I . . . I'm *beginning* to realize who I am. And I said: okay, I'm Jamaican, this is Jamaican language, I'm going to try and write a truly Jamaican play in terms of the language, the body language, the spoken language, the shape of the play, the form, everything, I'm just going to go fully overboard. And I really stuck my neck out that time. And there was panic. I remember when the play opened, and the first night was fairly full, they were all complimentaries; and the second night there was 18, and the next night I think there were 14. Panic! I only had eighteen dollars left in the bank. But the fourth night was full, and it was full for years after. But that for me was a conscious decision, choice, I made: to write a play which was so ur-

ban, the language — it's such a beautiful language, you know; doesn't reach out beyond here very much; but it made a great impact on me and on the society, in terms of, you know, the cross-reflections.

Yes, but you are about to have three of your plays published in England, and one of them is *Smile Orange*. Do you think that this will be accessible to people who are not familiar with Jamaican language?

Yes, because what we have done with it is sort of straightened out the language a little bit . . . Another thing I learnt in England which has served me very well is I was taught phonetics, and I developed a fantastic ear, so I could reproduce these sounds very accurately, and I wrote them down almost in phonetics. The play in the original version is almost phonetic. It took, I think five hours to read the first morning. Because the actors themselves who actually spoke the language had never seen it written as accurately, and in fact couldn't make head or tail of it: they had to sit there and work out the phonetics as well. I think it would be a problem in terms of international audiences, in the original phonetic way I had written it.

But will a Jamaican reader be able to hear the Jamaican sounds in the comparative standardization that you have done for the book?

Yes, I think so. I think so. Most definitely.

You wrote *Smile Orange*, then, in Jamaican language partly because you



A scene from *School's Out*, one of the author's earlier plays.

had made a choice about language. Could you say a little about your choice of subject matter and, possibly, of theme?

The choice in fact carried through with subject matter and with theme; although a lot of people do say that a lot of the work is very Molière. And I wouldn't deny that it may be, although it was a conscious thing not to be, because Molière is really one of my favourites. I remember when I was blocked completely with *Smile Orange*. I found it was getting useless and I wasn't saying exactly what I wanted to say. So I just took off to clear my head, and I thought the seas would have done it. I went to England, nothing happened; on my way back, nothing happened. Pure desperation. And as good luck would have it, I met a man who was coming back from England after about ten years, to go back to his job.

"What is your job?" I asked.

"Oh, I'm a waiter. I used to be a waiter at Tower Isle."

And we sat with that man for — it was a twelve day voyage, and for the last seven days I spent my entire life and time with this man. And I probed his mind in all sorts of directions, every angle. And every night I went back to my cabin and I just wrote reams and reams and reams of notes — he solved every single problem for me: all the questions that I needed answered, about the actual spirit of that man, you know, he answered them. And I came back to Jamaica, and in three weeks I had finished writing. The whole thing just became very clear to me, as to his whole dilemma, because he was a reflection of everybody else, all our spirits actually.

Smile Orange, I think, first turned up as a film script in a Festival competition. Did you write it as a play originally?

How *Smile Orange* really came about: I was asked by the Tourist Board to write a radio serial that reflected something to do with tourism. Right: a letter from the Tourist Board, that's what happened. And I said; "Fine, but I know nothing about tourism, apart from the usual sort of middle-class way people view it, you know."

They said: "No problem, we will send you to Montego Bay and Ocho Rios and all the sort of tourist resorts and you can spend as much time as you like there, and soak up the scene, learn about it, and come back."



Geraldine Connor and Errol Johns play Miss Aggie and Pa Ben in the Trinidadian production of *Old Story Time*.

So in fact I spent about six to eight weekends on the North Coast, which the Tourist Board paid for. So I came back and I sorted out my notes and my thoughts and I heard everything, and it took me three months to write the first episode, of fourteen minutes. — three months work and it's like £10 an episode!

So I phoned up the lady at the Tourist Board and said: "Do I have a commitment with the Tourist Board in terms of this thing? Must I give you a radio serial in return?"

And they said: "No, we've asked two or three or four people, you know, to check out this thought, and any person who wanted to —"

I said: "What about the fact that you paid for me?"

And they said: "It's alright."

So I kept the little episode, my one episode, and I started developing the thing as a film. That's how it happened. And then it went to the play and back to the film and now it's...

Which episode was that?

Which episode was it? I think it was the episode of him coming, the beginning of the season, coming to the hotel, that's what it was, him and Joe.

After *Smile Orange* what did you write?

Orange opened '71. Between '70 and '71 was an extraordinarily productive year. Because I was working with Perry Henzell on *The Harder They Come* for

'70. I had the option to write pantomime as well, for the LTM. In fact I wrote that in one week. Started on Monday morning. It's the fastest I've ever worked, I just sat down... And Act II shows! It was terrible! In that year — eighteen months — I did *The Harder They Come*, I did *Music Boy*, and I did *Smile Orange*. And I did a little documentary as well, I can't remember what it was.

What was the next major play after *Smile Orange*?

The next major thing was... Oh, there were a couple of little things. There was *Comic Strip* which wasn't terribly successful. And there was *Sleeper* which is something I'm now in the process of re-working. And the next really important thing for me was *School's Out* which was drawing on the five or six years that I'd spent as a schoolteacher. I disregarded a lot of the really bad episodes: You know, some really frightening things happened. It would be unfair to have used those as a general picture, so I didn't.

Did you find yourself doing any kind of background research for *School's Out*, or were you able to write it from your basic experience?

I had some notes, lots of little notes. In the last year of my teaching I was taking the odd note of things. And after I left teaching I spoke with a lot of schoolteachers who were still involved in the teaching process, and picked their brains, and asked what was happening, you know, if it had improved, if what I was going to be doing now would be accurate. A lot of research went into *School's Out* — months, before I actually sat down to writing the damn thing.

You're pretty well known, I think, as an author who spends a lot of time trying to make sure he gets the background of fact correct. This is so, isn't it?

That is so. Because I panic if I should ever say something that was not true, or not real in terms of my work. So I check just about every detail. I check, I find out.

There have been at least two major productions of *School's Out* in Jamaica, and you have been yourself clearly associated with one and you saw the other. Do you have any comment to make on the realization of your script, in either case?

The first one, I'd say — the production by Yvonne Jones — was by far the better one. (In fact, the most exciting production I saw of *School's Out* was one I did myself, funnily enough — just one performance of it. It was done in a vast theatre, in the O'Keefe Centre in Toronto, and the stage there was really a thrust, a complete thrust stage, with all the exits and entrances made through the audience under the stage. I think it was the space that really just let the play explode).

I've been thinking about a very novel production of *School's Out* — it would need a little rewriting here and there — where I would see the staff all as kindergarten, all dressed as children, using just some little thing when they become schoolteachers, and then the other six would take on the roles of the students. I think it could be very exciting.

And while we're on the realization of scripts — *Smile Orange* has been done as a film as well as a play. Would you like to compare the two?

I, to be very honest, wasn't as satisfied with the film as I would have liked. And I think it was partially my inexperience in terms of translating from the stage into the medium of film. I would have liked to have started over the day I had finished, because by then I had learnt enough from and about film to begin making a picture. The next picture that I make will show the effect of that first one.

What is the next picture you're likely to make?

Mervyn, I don't know. Films are a tricky business. They cost so much, and one has so little control of the film business. Because I've been ripped off — particularly with *The Harder They Come* — so badly that the experiences, they leave scars on your mind. I've had some good friends in fact — you know, people like yourself and Dr Basil Keane and the people like Rex Nettleford who keeps sending little messages that whatever I do, don't ever stop writing, don't ever stop writing. And there are the people I meet on the street who come up and just tell me thank you very much, and they go their way. And people come and say — like at the Awards thing¹ a lady came and said that she just came for one express purpose, she hoped I would be there and she just wanted to say hello to me because I had given her so much pleasure. And it's those things that tend to erase the scars, you know

the times in one's life when one is ripped off.

What was your official role in relation to the film of *Smile Orange*?

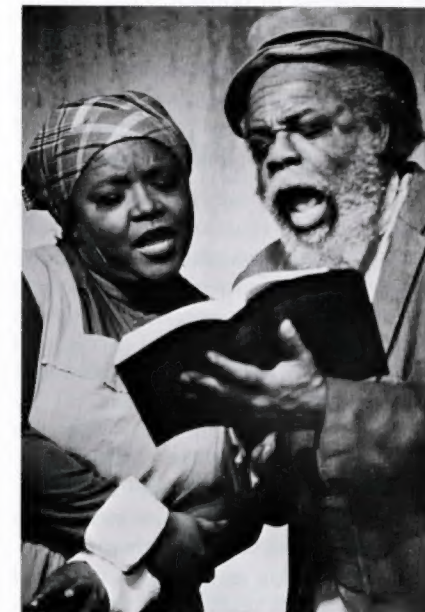
Author and director. In both capacities I was a little bit of a novice. Most people spend three or four or five or six, up to ten years, working as go-fors or in some capacity, you know, assistant this, assistant that, and working their way up. I literally jumped in head first on the first morning. I'm not making excuses for myself, but... In fact, you know, I shouldn't be knocking myself. It's been by far the most successful Caribbean picture in terms of its appeal. And what it's done in the region has been absolutely wonderful. I'm not ashamed of it, it's just that my sense of my own need for perfection wasn't satisfied in that.

And what about your exact role in *The Harder They Come*? You were a co-author. How much of the writing did you actually do?

Most of it, in fact...

You've mentioned "the next film that you do" but you're not sure what that will be. Has it occurred to you that you might, for example, film any of your successful plays?

It would be a shame, in fact, if *Old Story Time* wasn't filmed. I think it would make a wondrous, really beautiful, film. People have spoken with me about it, but at this particular time I really want to explore... for example, what I'm doing now, this musical thing



Pa Ben (Charles Hyatt) quotes chapter and verse to his friend Miss Aggie (Cyrene Tomlinson) in the Jamaican production of *Old Story Time*.

that I'm in to, I wouldn't want to stop until I've tried out the show and seen how it works.

This musical thing that you're into, would you say a little about it?

I've been rewriting the *Everyman* Miracle play. I did a very sort of straight translation of it. But more and more, as I work on it, my own thoughts, my own self, my own times, are beginning to reflect more and more strongly within the context of the script. Always wanted to do a musical. And I'm hoping that this one will be it, you know, because I'm combining all the forces — the music, the drama, the costumes, the set, everything has great meaning...

You said you've always wanted to do a musical. What do you think, looking back, of your pantomime *Music Boy*, of which, you've already said a little, *Music Boy*, was, of course, a musical.

It was half-half. My initial thing when I started was to break the tradition, right? Everybody always writes these pantomimes, I'm going to write a musical. And halfway through it I got cold feet and it became very pantomimic and really lost all its meaning for me. I thought Act II was dreadful.

Three of your plays are about to be published together, and each of these was a great success, in terms of the number of performances and the response of audiences. Can you help us by telling us how many performances of *Smile Orange* there were, how many performances of *School's Out*, and perhaps how many performances of *Old Story Time* so far?

Smile Orange was 245 or 247. *School's Out* was 278. And *Story Time* is well over 200, I'm not certain of the exact figure. In its brief time *Old Story Time* has played in more countries than, I think, all the other plays put together.

In which countries has *Old Story Time* been put on?

It has played in Cayman, in St Thomas in the Virgin Islands, St Croix, in Trinidad, in Miami, and here in Kingston. I'm a little bit tired of moving around with it, you know. I need to do something else. But there's a possible production lined up for Barbados early next year, and I'm investigating one in Washington, in America.

These productions are of two kinds, aren't they? There is the Jamaican production taken abroad, as to Miami. But

there have also been a number of productions where you yourself have gone and have directed a local cast. Would you tell us which is which?

In Trinidad I used a local cast, and in Nassau where the play opened. The Jamaican production was very good, but what may have made the difference in *Nassau* was that it played in a much better theatre and the equipment was a lot better, one could light it in the correct way, one had the *correct* set and the correct distance to conjure the illusion and the spaces the play needs. Close-up doesn't work, it needs perspective. And one had two really marvellous actors in Nassau, as good in fact as Charlie and Leonie are in Jamaica.

What? Would you tell us their names, please?

One is Winston Saunders who is an amazing Caribbean talent. In fact he is a lawyer. He is the most amazing male talent I've discovered in the Caribbean. He sings incredibly well, he plays the piano fantastically — any of those things could, I think, have become his life's work. He writes very well — plays — directs well as well, acts well, sings well, I don't think he dances. The girl, who is the sort of Louise Bennett of Nassau is Pandora Gomez — again an amazing talent.

The Nassau production — I was up until three, four, in the morning trying to work things out — for me was total excitement, that very first production, you know, just trying to put it together. I didn't know what the set should be like, I mean it was all new to me. And having spent so much time writing it, you know, to go from one thing to the next was very difficult. But it worked, it really worked.

One of the most striking things of the play in performance is the skill of the transitions. At what stage did that come to you in the composition of the play? Or was it something that was finally discovered in the directing?

It was finally discovered in the directing. Because I worked on a principle: when I started rehearsing the play, I said to the actors — they asked about the set — "I'm really not certain what the set should be, but I'm going to try something and let's see how it works." I said: "We will start with a bare stage, we will have no set. Whenever we absolutely need an object I will supply it. Come the end of Act I, whatever objects we have needed and used we will recycle



Lois (Karen Ford) and Lennie (Karl Binger) drift apart in *Old Story Time*.

for Act II". It worked like an absolute dream. The absolute minimum, and really used and re-used. One can't do that with everything, but with that sort of play it was the perfect strategy to have adopted.

What about the story-telling frame, was that in the original writing?

No, the story-teller wasn't in the original way I conceived the play. I spent so much time on that play, like two and a half going three years. And it wasn't until I discovered Pa Ben that I really solved all my problems. Because just the whole forty-year span — I had to find the mechanics of doing it. I did, eventually.

Would you say something about the emphasis on ritual in this play? Particularly the whole thing about the putting on of obeah and the taking off of obeah.

Pre- *Old Story Time*, I'm trying to discover form and structure that works for me as a Caribbean playwright. I think it's going to take a long while of probing and, I mean, really chopping down trees before one finds this thing. I sort of said to myself: I'm getting very bored and tired with the proscenium, and it's restricting my thought in many ways. So I'm going to try and go outside of it, but where do I go? And I said to myself: I would like to touch bases with some of my own traditions, my own roots — I hate to use the word but: roots. And so I did a lot of research on the African methods of transmitting ideas and thoughts and facts, right? And the story-teller often has these flights of fancy where they can take off, it's this going

from being a bird to a man to a stone, oh within a fraction of a second, you know, a couple of seconds. And the whole of the research I did fascinated me. The whole of this ritual thing, and the obeah which also comes out of that environment, I researched that thoroughly. Rex Nettleford was very helpful, because he and I chatted and he suggested some books, etc. that I could read. On the question of form and structure, I would . . . in many ways a lot of England and my traditions there, my schooling there, seeped into me and, being a product of colonial society, I'm not able to rid myself completely of it. So *Story Time* for me is still in many ways cross-cultural, there are still two forces at work there. Maybe that's not such a bad thing after all . . .

It's amazing, though: a couple of friends of mine have been round the Schools Festivals and the Drama Festivals in schools and around the island, and it's amazing, I hear, how much root the *Old Story Time* form is taking in the society, you know, — similar form, people are using it, and that makes me feel, you know, very very pleased.

It's a kind of circular thing, though, isn't it? In that it's a story-teller's form which is itself folk; it is there in Anancy, it is there in our folk tales.

I have another thing which I must explore in terms of form. If I go back to the origins of my interest in the drama — the concert, the concert form, where it's just a stage, any drum will do, or any little box will do, and the community sits around and one man goes up and

sings and they pay to take him off. I think that, in its own way, could be developed into some real areas of excitement that I want to think about. Another thing I really want to do . . . is the two-hander,² I'd like to write a two-hander. . . . I want to explore the mechanics of the two-hander.

Now, you've decided on three plays that you're going to publish together, and you've written a number of other plays, some of them you're re-working. I wonder if you'd say just a little more about some of those plays which you don't happen to have chosen for inclusion. For example, what about *Sleeper*?

Sleeper, I'm rewriting. Talk about research! That topic, the thing about man and woman and all the mythologies that go along with it, I mean, I've actually done just about a year's research on it.

You mean reading?

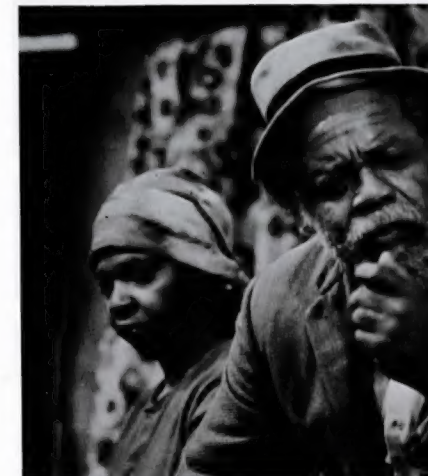
Reading, yes, and chatting with people. I go through all those American magazines. I go back to the Bible, I check the whole Jewish mythology there of Adam and Eve. And I'm trying to decipher now how much of that mythology in fact has become a harsh reality in our world.

Were you dissatisfied with *Sleeper* as it existed?

Not dissatisfied. I've thought that there was more I may have done with it. I might have explored more in terms of the traditions, where they are at this point, and I wanted to know how come they got here. This is what I'm doing now. Because when I research the role of woman through all the periods, the agricultural periods and what-not and what-not . . . The research I'm doing is really beginning to excite me.

We've mentioned *The Gadget*, *Smile Orange*, *Sleeper*, *School's Out*, *Old Story Time*, *Comic Strip*. Are there any other major plays you've written which we don't happen to have mentioned? — *There's Music Boy*, of course.

Which has a beautiful Act I. I think it will make a great musical some time. And there's *The Harder They Come*. Those, basically, are the ones that I've kept. I have, upstairs, dozens of unfinished works. And when I start reading some of them I say, "This really sounds exciting". But because one has to divide one's life between producer, director, writer, one isn't as productive as one often might like.



Old friends Miss Aggie (Leonie Forbes) and Pa Ben (Charles Hyatt) have a disagreement and in the vexation — silence. (*Old Story Time* — Jamaican production).

In publicity for *Old Story Time* and in some of the reviews a connection between that and *The Gadget* was frequently mentioned.

In fact I've used very little of *The Gadget* really, very little: like three or four minutes in fact, if that much. The relationships remain pretty much the same, because I've just developed them a lot more and found new hope and new salvation which I hadn't thought of before. The original was very cynical I thought — not necessarily cynical, but incomplete in terms of the psyche of the people that we're dealing with.

Just some general questions now, Trevor, before we end. Is there any instance that you can think of in which you wrote a particular role with a particular actor or actress in mind?

Yes, and it never worked out at all . . . So now I just write. Quite often what I do is I have people in mind when I'm writing — not necessarily actors, just people.

Has any actor, by choosing a particular bit of business or a particular interpretation, shown you, as a writer, something about what you have written that you had not really understood when you wrote it?

Yes. In fact, Charlie in many ways, Leonie, and, even more so, this young man in the Bahamas, Winston Saunders. He's a whizz, an absolute whizz! He'd come back with something that utterly surprised you, that sub-text which is there and because it's your sub-text you don't see it but he saw it, you know. And *that* is a real thrill, actually, for a writer: another mind has managed to pick it up . . .

You've mentioned Molière in the course of this conversation. Are there any other playwrights who you think have had a special influence on your work?

Maybe not so much 'influence' . . . People that I really admire, I mean really admire, I think they're so talented. Ayckbourn: I think he's a genius, Alan Ayckbourn. Shaffer, the man who wrote *Equus*, I think he's a whizz. Well, Shakespeare, he's so good.

Ibsen?

Ibsen, Ibsen.

Ibsen is behind *Sleeper*, isn't he?

No, I'm just enthralled by Ibsen and his sense of construction.

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I remember some years ago you were interviewed and talked about the growth of The Barn and the fact that you had set yourself a personal time-table, which you don't happen to have mentioned yet today. Could you tell me about that time-table and its fulfilment?

That time-table came about, actually, in England when one was being eaten away by frustration, and there were these eight people who had all just finished or were just finishing drama school to come back to Jamaica. And it was '65 at the time. And we said twelve years should be the time that we would need, you know, to do this thing. So The Barn initially was called Barn Theatre '77: that's the correct name for The Barn. What has happened in twelve years is really beyond my own wildest dreams, in terms of my own work and in terms of other work within the society. Unfortunately, though, I'm a little bit distressed sometimes about the lack of care and concern from a lot of the other playwrights, and the people who put on plays. People are seeing theatre now as a good money-earner — which it can be, but at the same time I would like for them to delve a little bit into quality and try and show the society a little bit more about itself rather than just making them laugh, you know, all the time.

You are Jamaican, Trevor, and you are frequently in Jamaica, but you seem to be living partly abroad now. Where are you living? Where are you really based?

You see my house is still intact, right? But I live in Trinidad half of the time, I go between here and there. I need a sense of real quiet, to work. It doesn't have to be a quiet place or a quiet space, but I need very little intrusion. And Jamaica for me, in many ways, has become very negative, there are sort of negative thoughts that are floating about, and on any given day if I go out on the streets or if people come here, when two or three are gathered together negative thoughts or negative thinking erupt and people are saying, "Boy, you leave yet?" Or, "So-and-so gone, you know, and So-and-so leaving!" And it interrupts my thinking, it really does. At this time, I'm not very much involved in the Trinidadian society, what happens there doesn't affect me; what happens here affects me deeply. So I remove myself for a couple of months, which I'm going to do again shortly — just to sit down, it could be any space that I can find a room, where the news items don't



Lennie (Karl Binger) plays "show me yours and a show you mine" with his friend down by the river. A hilarious scene from *Old Story Time* (Jamaican production)

affect me, and just to work. A quiet room, you know. That's not asking much.

Why Trinidad?

Because my family is in Trinidad. My wife is from Trinidad. So it seemed a convenient enough place, in terms of bureaucratic tangles, you know to find a space?

Your child is a Trinidadian citizen?

No, a Jamaican citizen, and very proud of it too. At school — she's only five — she says, "I'm a Jamaican lady" — so she terms herself. She's very well aware of herself. And a great fan of the plays, — she hasn't seen *School's Out* yet, but she has seen *Story Time* and *Smile Orange* and she loves them.

Your work has been very closely involved with Jamaican society and Jamaican experience, you have written as a very acute observer of the scene, and yet there is very little that is overtly political in the work. How do you respond to the present time as a writer? Do you think our political situation might become a focus of your work?

I suspect it will. In fact, the two-hander that I'm thinking about doing gets very heavily involved in the dilemma that two people face by living within this society. I suspect that the effect on people's lives of what is happening now will make a really classic sort of drama. And the actual event, the actual pulling of the gun that is going on now — would

be dramatic, yes, but it's the effect of the pulling of that trigger that is fascinating me, and not so much on those who die but on those who live, who are alive, and how they are responding and will continue to respond and how they will begin to act as people.

The two-hander, I think, will begin to broach the subject. I know how it begins.

Are you religious, Trevor?

Yes, in a way, Mervyn. I don't go to church, haven't been to church for years. Somebody said that the apostles aren't necessarily the best people to listen to. I'm from a very religious Christian-type family. I believe that in my work, when I really get into a sense of quiet, and if I can explore — and if I starve myself a little bit, if I don't eat: if I have minimum breakfast, minimum lunch, really minimal, right? and maybe minimal supper — if I'm completely alone, with nobody around, you know, no interruption at all — I find I can make communication with a medium whom I refer to as God, I trust myself to that Being that surrounds me in this state, and the thoughts that come through my head, I oftentimes wonder . . . That thought had to be coming through another Person or another Being or something. But it needs preparation, you have to prepare yourself for the experience. And when I write in that circumstance I really write well, I really do.

Like at the end of *Old Story Time*, which is a kind of hymn to love in the final moments.

Yes. I wrote that actually, I wrote most of *Story Time*, in Trinidad, removed from other influences because I wanted to concentrate my energies almost completely on that. When you read the new work — *Everyman* — . . . I'm hoping that it will move people, when they watch that final moment in the play, that they too will begin to feel that sense of communication that I have with my Being. And that's ultimately what I'm hoping for in that.

[Wednesday 21 July 1982]

Now Trevor, your book *Old Story Time* and *Other Plays*, which has in it *Smile Orange*, *School's Out* and *Old Story Time*, has been published. How well has it been received?

So far I think it has surprised the publishers. I think initially they published

5,000 copies, which was sort of the minimum that they normally do, and I gather there've been either one or two reprintings since it was first published. . . . It's being done, I know, at various universities — it's being done in the Caribbean, also it's being paid attention to in North America; at Howard, I think, it's being done in the fall, and at York University in Toronto and one or two others in Montreal. I think the problem we're having now is just finding copies.

Now when you say 'done' you mean studied as an academic thing or also being produced?

Studied as an academic thing. There'll be a production of the play in Toronto in August of '82.

Which play?

Old Story Time.

Oh, that's your production, though, is it not? Isn't it a production that you are taking from Jamaica with some of the original actors — I think, Charles Hyatt and Leonie Forbes?

It's really the Jamaican production that's going.

Fine. Now, since *Old Story Time*, Trevor, you've had a couple of plays on in Kingston. I think the first one after *Old Story Time* was *Everyman*. Would you like to say something about how that went?

Didn't go too well for me. One, I lost money on it. Two, I wasn't totally satisfied with how the production turned out. I guess because there are certain levels of excitement that I wanted to see happen in the production which didn't happen for me. I've been thinking about it since — why it didn't work as well as it should have done or could have done. I'm thinking now of rewriting the thing to work for television, video. And more and more I think I'm coming back to setting it almost totally within the Jamaican experience. An *Everyman* in Germany is not the same as an *Everyman* in Jamaica — different problems, different dilemmas. And I think I was maybe trying to reach out and not paying enough attention to the problems that exist here in this society. I think that when I do re-write the thing, it'll have more meaning to, say, the Jamaican audience and will be for, say, the North Americans maybe fascination, really.

I wonder, though, whether the play was as unsuccessful as you fear. Were you



The gunshots are fast and furious. Jim is scared so Gloria sings him a lullabye. Grace McGhie and Charles Hyatt in *Two Can Play*.

not facing a special problem with the expense of paying an orchestra, of having a larger theatre than your plays are usually performed in, and the need to start filling it very quickly before you allowed the word-of-mouth enthusiasm to build?

I don't think so, Mervyn. The sort of excitement that I envisaged wasn't there: for example, there's one particular sequence, the Day of Judgement, which for me should have either been terrifying or euphoria, really, but whatever way you see it, it's very ultimate. I have these crazy notions at times, and the crazy notions were not achieved — put it this way — for me, as the writer. In fact, when it's redone, on film, hopefully, I'm going to try and push for some of these crazy notions, win or lose, rather than playing it safe.

I wonder, though, whether you would say a bit about how it fitted in that space, in the Little Theatre? One of the things that some of us felt, who were enjoying what we saw, was that in a smaller theatre precisely the same production, and particularly the same music, which I certainly greatly admired, by Peter Ashbourne, might have worked more strongly.

It is very likely that what you say is true, Mervyn. The music I really enjoyed a lot. A lot of the production I enjoyed as well, except that it seemed to have got very lost in the space. And I suspect as well there were lots of actor problems — for instance, not everybody could sing as well as they ought to have been

able to sing for that sort of show. I suspect with a strong cast who could better carry the thing it might have been a bit more successful.

Yes. I wonder if you'd say a bit in detail about financial problems of a show like that . . .

When one adds musicians, actors, crew, security, the people who do the sound, the technicians for the microphones and what not, one needed an audience of about 400 people a night to break even. When one fell below that figure it was really sudden death that one was dealing with, in terms of the economics. One lost a fair amount of money on it,



Pa Ben (Charles Hyatt) comforts his friend's son Lennie (Karl Binger) in a scene from *Old Story Time*.

though we did have a sponsor who was fairly generous. One still had to dig fairly deep into one's pocket to pay the bills.

How many people does the Little Theatre seat when it's full?

I think it's 652. And one needed to have it three-quarter full every night to begin to turn a profit.

Now, going back to your idea that when you're reworking *Everyman*, as you intend to do, you would like to look more closely at Jamaican attitudes to death, I wonder if you'd say a little bit more about that — because the production felt to many of us very Jamaican.

Okay. I'm hoping to go back — the source of all my work really tends to be my childhood. I remember when somebody died in one's community, and I gather this is a very African thing — one suppressed the sorrow and the sadness and replaced it with joy and mirth and singing and dancing and eating and lots of eating, lots of drinking . . . In re-writing *Everyman* I'm going to add the fact of how we dealt with death. I remember the tombing, one year after, was really celebration. My mind still has not focussed totally on the avenues that I am going to travel. But it's searching.

The other new play that you've put on in Jamaica since *Old Story Time* has recently opened, and it's *Two Can Play*, a two-hander which you talked about on a previous occasion as something you were grappling with. Would you say something about how you feel that has gone, and also what sort of reception it has had?

Still grappling with it, in many ways, because the grappling, for me, continues for years. There's some reworking, re-writing, that I'm going to be needing to do. I want to redesign the set almost completely. I want to look at the play again. I believe some place in there that the basic concept that I started out the play with, where the people spend twenty years of their lives dealing with crisis and not having time to deal with themselves as two people, and in the final analysis having to deal with that — I believe that still exists as my basic concept. Whether I have the inner workings of the play, — I don't think I've fully accomplished that at this time. I thought in fact that the basic structure of the play, the basic theme, was so fool-proof that I think I just forgot to work it out as carefully as I should have done.



"Ah it dat!" Gloria (Grace McGhie) in *Two Can Play* exults to Jim (Charles Hyatt) as they find a way to smuggle \$2,500 American dollars out of the country to pay for a permanent visa to the U.S.A.

So far though the play is doing very well: people come in and cry a little bit, laugh a lot — sometimes too much. Michael Manley wrote a review of the play which will be out soon.³ He, of all the critics, funnily enough, seems to have understood the play best of all, and in fact to have gone beyond what shortcomings might exist in the structural working-out and to have gone right to the very source. He is well taken with it as a piece that looks at our society and offers maximum hope. I believe that I'm on this eternal kick with the work that I'm doing, of making ourselves and our lives extremely valid. I think unless we begin to see ourselves as being totally valid, tomorrow doesn't hold any hope.

I think many of the reviewers understood the basic thrust, but they were perhaps less persuaded than Michael Manley was that the end had been earned.

I spent less time on *Two Can Play* than I've usually spent on a piece of work. It took me about nine months, from when I really started, to when I started to stage the thing. Oh there's more work yet to be done.

I think there's a prospect, is there not, of *Two Can Play* being made into a film?

Two Can Play has been swamped by people saying, Can I make this into a film? I think it'll make an incredibly beautiful movie. What I'm doing now is trying to seal all the contractual loop-

holes that can lead one to distress five years from now. So it's with my lawyers, trying to organize the details of a contract. But there're two or three companies that are interested in making it into a film. I need to sit down and just simply conceptualize the damn



"Is inna my arms him dead" Gloria (Grace McGhie) recalls the terrible night of Pop's death. A scene from *Two Can Play*.

thing in terms of movie or television. But it's on its way.

When do you think a script for the film might be ready, and when do you think some company might start making the film?

The company is ready. I am not. Because I need the contracts to be absolutely clear before I start writing the screenplay for it. It's advice I'm giving to everybody nowadays: get a damn good lawyer, because relationships do change when the till starts to tinkle; change drastically, really change — so it's best to organize properly and well before one gets involved.

Now, you've worked in film before, and you've worked of course a great deal in theatre. Do you find yourself increasingly interested in film?

Ninety per cent of my interest, really, is with the theatre. I will continue, for the rest of my life I believe, strongly, to take pot luck on myself with the theatre — which is, to stay at home, sit down, without a contract, and spend a year or two years trying to write a piece, and at the end of that time attempting to put it on and hoping that it works. With film, I need a firm contract before I go in. It's more or less for me a job to do. While with the theatre it's something that I have to do, it's a sort of compulsion that drives me. I'll never write a film script again on spec, but a play I will always do.

Now, as you know, the video revolution is here. And I think you have been talking in some other places about the need for us to provide material for that. Would you like to say more?

I have visions, Mervyn. What really upsets me terribly is the other day I heard that a BBC crew was here making a six-hour reggae documentary. Now that really upsets me. Because here again, here now, we have the raw material, the sources are all here; we should be doing it. I believe that, one, just in terms of basic employment for people; two, in terms of foreign exchange; three, in terms of writing our own records, because I think we will do them best and most accurately; I believe we need to be doing it. I have problems as well with the satellite just coming in this direction all the time, feeding us what I call the wrong energies almost; because unless there are positive images of ourselves, the imbalance, I find, of 95 per cent of the faces on television



Gloria (Grace McGhie) tells Jim (Charles Hyatt) of his sexual inadequacies in a scene from *Two Can Play*.

being European and North American, I think it's just bad. Bad for me; bad for the children; I think it's bad for ourselves, really; and I think it's something that we have to right — r-i-g-h-t, and w-r-i-t-e as well — because I think we need to sit down and start pushing ourselves, from both angles, both from the spiritual and from the economic. I think there's much money to be made out of entertainment, and there's much that we can do to build these very firm images of ourselves. And I believe that I have to start taking a more active role in making this thing possible. Because, as I've said earlier, I've devoted, and will continue to devote, most of my life to the theatre. But I believe that, right at this point in time, all of this video thing needs to have a person who has a concept in the back of his head and who will simply, like talk to somebody, and say, I need a script immediately. Because right now the problem is not so much money or lack of technology, the problem is lack of material.

What we need now, desperately, are writers. The money is there, the money is waiting, and the equipment is there, and the markets are there.

Now, finally, Trevor, are you beginning to think yet of your next new play?

Yes, Mervyn. What has happened is that from *Everyman* ended until now I've been excessively tired, really. I need a couple of weeks to cool my head out. I'm hoping to write a new play that looks at the opposite side of the coin to *Old Story Time*. *Old Story Time* dealt

with Len, the man, being pushed, you know, up the ladder into the society. And I'm hoping to look, in great depth and detail, at the woman's side of the story, how she fared. It's the same theme again, but looking at the woman's point of view.

You mean she develops rather like Len, up the ladder, or stays home and doesn't? Or what?

No, the routing is quite different. Well, one, she'll be a fair-skinned woman. Len was black. She'll be a brown-skinned woman. And, without exposing too much of that story, I'm aware of the great distress of a lot of brown Jamaican families who in fact relied almost completely on the colour of skin for survival and on thinking that that was enough to get them through life. And I'm looking . . . That's not the whole of my story — I don't want to give too much of it away at this time, but it will start in the rural area, it will go very urban, and it will find its salvation, hopefully, on a beach in a rural area. Like *Old Story Time* it will be quite an involved tale. Should be interesting.

Trevor Rhone, thank you very much.

FOOTNOTES

1. At a ceremony on 20 October 1980 Trevor Rhone received from the Governor-General the national award of Commander of the Order of Distinction.
2. A play with a cast of two.
3. *Rising Sun* (August 1982).

Current Status of Copyright Legislation in Jamaica

Heather Royes talks to Senator Tom Tavares-Finson
(CHAIRMAN OF THE COPYRIGHT COMMITTEE)

Introduction

Modern copyright legislation is a complex and far-reaching legal framework which often means different things to different people. For example, musicians, writers and creators of artistic works are often under the impression that copyright law will help them to protect their works from foreign exploitation, but at the same time, they will utilize or plagiarize works from abroad without receiving the creator's permission. Copyright law does give protection but also carries sanctions against abuses of the law.

The notion of copyright as an abstract concept existed many centuries ago in China and Korea, with the idea of assigning ownership to intellectual works. When printing and engraving developed in Germany in the 15th century, there began a more pronounced attitude towards the recognition of ownership of intellectual creation. This was regulated by licenses and privileges to print, usually controlled by the State or even the Sovereign. By the 17th century, there was a chaotic situation in Europe regarding the system of granting privileges to stationers.

In 1710 the English House of Commons passed a law known as the Queen Anne Statute "For the encouragement of learning, by vesting the copies of printed books in the authors or purchasers of such copies during times therein

mentioned". This was the first law on copyright and it recognized the individual's right to protect a published work. In copyright legislation, England was closely followed by France, the United States, Germany, Denmark and other European countries.

At present, Jamaica is governed by the United Kingdom Copyright Act of 1911. Despite many changes to the U.K. law as well as a new Act brought into force in 1956, these amendments are not applicable to Jamaica. In 1977, the Jamaican Government passed a new copyright law but because of certain problems, it was never enacted. In 1981, a copyright committee was set up under the chairmanship of Senator Tom Tavares-Finson. The final report and recommendations of this committee were submitted to the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Edward Seaga, in June 1982.

The Committee examined the numerous facets of copyright, not only in relation to the Jamaican situation, but also pertaining to the International Copyright Conventions and to the more modern aspects of copyright. Some of the subjects reviewed were: computer software, works of artistic creation (fine arts), literary works, photography, photocopying, folk lore, popular music, sound recordings, film and video products, and satellite broadcasts. Whenever necessary, the committee called in qualified persons from these areas to give evi-

dence about the Jamaican situation.

In view of the widespread interest in the topic, Jamaica Journal commissioned this interview with Senator Tavares-Finson. Particular emphasis is placed on those specific areas covered by copyright which are most pertinent to Jamaica.

Question: How do you define copyright?

Sen. Finson: I would describe it as the rights granted by law to the author or creator of artistic, literary and musical works to release his creations to the public as his own and to authorize the use of those works in specific ways. Inherent in that definition are essentially two sets of rights. Economic rights which refer to the right to receive remuneration from the use of the work, and moral rights which refer to rights such as the right to claim paternity of the work and to prevent what the artist or court regards as being mutilation of the work. So it's two sets of rights — moral rights and economic rights, both of which go together to make up one copyright in a particular piece of work.

Could you give us the background to the Jamaican situation?

The first piece of copyright legislation which was made applicable to Jamaica was the Copyright Act of 1911. It is a United Kingdom Act extended to Jamaica and other countries of the Commonwealth. In terms of British and Jamaican copyright, it codified the existing copyright laws and it abolished common law copyright. So that all copyrights now flow not from the common law, but from the Statute of 1911. The original U.K. Act was altered on numerous occasions between 1911 and 1956. However, these changes were never made applicable to Jamaica, with the consequence that we remain governed by the 1911 United Kingdom Act.

What about the 1977 Jamaica Act?

Between 1911 and the present time, the United Kingdom abolished, altered, changed or enacted new legislation which took account of the rapid developments in technology and communications. In 1974, a Jamaican Government copyright committee was established to make recommendations to update the legislation in Jamaica. Following submissions of that committee, a Jamaican Copyright Act of 1977 was passed into law but never brought into force. Surprisingly, from my point of view, section one of the Act states that — and I quote — "This Act may be cited as the Copyright Act 1977, and shall come into operation on a date to be appointed by the Minister, by notice published in the Gazette and different days may be appointed for the purpose of different provisions of this Act". The result is that although legislation was put on the books, principally to deal with the increasing pressure for copyright legislation from that very vocal sector in our society — the musicians and writers of songs, popular music, etc. — this Act was never brought into force. The principal reason is that the infrastructure necessary for copyright legislation was never put into effect and there was never a complete understanding of precisely what was involved in operating effective copyright legislation in terms, for example, of a tribunal and in terms of what is involved in registration. In fact, that legislation requires optional registration, but at no time was any budgetary provision made for such registration which would require a considerable outlay of money, training of personnel and so on.

But as a piece of legislation, was the only reason it was not enforced because it was expensive? Why are we going through

the same exercise again if that was the only reason?

No. It's not the only reason. There were certain flaws in the legislation. The point I was making was that regardless of the flaws, it could have been implemented and it would certainly have done some good because there are many provisions in it which are regarded as being standard provisions. The 1977 legislation bears a striking resemblance to the 1956 United Kingdom Act. The major change relates to optional registration. But while the resemblance to the 1956 Act is very striking, many provisions of the legislation are what one would regard as being basic copyright provisions, so that one can alter them only so much. It's a framework of legislation which was repeated in 1977. The intention of government to enact this legislation, this copy of the 1956 Act, came in for quite a bit of criticism — locally and internationally — and it was felt that many of the decisions taken by the committee itself established by the government were not put into effect in the legislation. In their report on Caribbean Copyright Laws, the unit for the Harmonization of Laws of the CARICOM Secretariat, appealed to the Jamaican Government not to bow to pressure from the community and implement this legislation, but to study carefully the question of copyright in the modern context. The report of the Secretariat was in 1977, and particularly in view of the fact that the Whitford Committee in the United Kingdom had studied the 1956 Act and recommended that it should be re-drafted to take account not only of modern means of communications and modern means of reproduction but to tidy up the drafting style, it was regarded as silly for the Jamaican Government to adopt that piece of legislation in 1977.

What do you feel are the most problematic areas of copyright for Jamaica?

I think the areas dealing with popular music and folklore. Those provisions which relate specifically to the music industry and the problems of the music industry, are in my opinion perhaps the most important, and those that we have to take particular care with to ensure that that delicate balance in our music industry is not overturned. I think it would be advantageous if we could incorporate a system of optional registration which would apply across the board in all aspects of copyright but especially in terms of the music industry. It would be of great importance for the individual author, the individual writer of songs. I think it would add to the possibility of his receiving protection. It would instill a degree of discipline because what would be required is for the individual author to make a copy of his work, to write down his work in some form and have it registered with a central agency. That registration would prove a case of ownership if it was required in a court of law. I think that that is one of the things that is most important and that it should be adopted in our upcoming legislation. Secondly, we have to look very closely at the whole question of the infringement of copyright and remedies available to aggrieved parties with particular reference to the music industry. We have to look at some innovative ways to prevent pirating of musical works in Jamaica. It has been suggested, for example (and I do not know what the government is going to decide about this), that before a record company begins to press a record a certificate of clearance must be secured from the copyright owner stating the terms that this owner gives the maker of the record. That certificate would certainly go a long way in cutting down on the piracy in the music industry

in Jamaica today. I think we also have to look very closely at the question of neighbouring rights. Because quite often when Jamaican artists and musicians talk about copyright, they are in fact talking about neighbouring rights and the rights which fall under that heading.

Could you define this for us?

Neighbouring rights involve several different types of rights. The trend nowadays is either to include these rights within the copyright legislation or alternatively to use separate legislation to cover these rights. What I think has come out before is that copyright seeks to protect the author of original works. That is to say, original literary, dramatic or musical works. When we speak of neighbouring rights, we are referring to a group of rights which relate to the protection which is offered to the producers of phonograms or sound recordings — that is to say records, audiovisual works, films, videos etc. broadcasting organizations and performers, as distinct from authors in relation to their activities. Let us take the situation of a person who is singing a song on a stage in Jamaica. When he speaks about copyright, what he is often talking about is his right to prevent people from, for example, taping his performance or filming his performance and using that performance at will. The problem is that in terms of copyright his performance would not be protected as such, since he is merely a performer, the assumption being that he is not the author of the work being performed. It is the author of that work who would be protected. But often times the need exists to protect that performance. If we look at the question of the producers of phonograms once more, we can identify this problem again. A record is a piece of plastic. It is not original material, not an original work. It is a composite of several original works, that is to say, the music and the lyrics. The music and the lyrics would be protected. The authors of that music and those lyrics would be protected under copyright. The problem is, what protection should one offer the person who actually invests his money to produce, to print and to press that record? Now a situation has arisen in the United Kingdom, for example, where the producers of records are given what is regarded as a general copyright. Their work, that record, that disc, is protected under copyright legislation as an original work. I think that this is a wrong principle. I believe that the producers of phonograms and the performers, should be protected under neighbouring rights. That is to say, a group of similar rights akin to copyright.

Translate that into laypeople's terms. Say you are talking to a Jamaican musician.

What I will do is deal with the performers' right, with the recording rights, audiovisuals, etc. When you speak of performers' rights . . . these are the rights that we are speaking of: John Brown who is a performer of works — say, for example, he is singing a Bob Marley song — the work itself, the song itself would already be protected in the interest of Bob Marley or his estate as the case may be. However, the person who is singing that song should have some rights as well. These performers' rights would include the right to prevent someone going to where he is singing, with a large tape-recorder, taping it, transferring that tape on to record, selling those records and making a lot of money. Or the right to prevent a person with a camera from filming him, making a film of his performance and using that film to make money. In reality the position in Jamaica at the moment is

that without these performers' rights, there is actually nothing to prevent a person from filming a performance, and incorporating it into a film or a video or whatever, and making money out of it. Money would have to be paid to the copyright owner — who in the instance that I am giving, would be Bob Marley — but in terms of the performer himself, he in fact would be entitled to nothing at all since he is not the owner of the original work. That is the basis of the performers' rights.

But by the new law he would have the right to request payment?

Yes. What I hope will be included in the new legislation is the right to exercise control over the use of performances by performers. That is to say the exclusive right to authorize a making of a record from the performance, the broadcasting of that performance and the filming of that performance or the fixation of that performance.

In an instance where you have a film: you have three parties involved, you have the originator, the performer and the producer. Who would pay whom? Who would pay Bob Marley's estate for example?

The person who is making the film.

And would he also pay the performer?

In this instance, this would be required.

Therefore, anyone using the film would pay the producer, or the person who owns the film?

The person who owns the film. He is going to go out and sell that film commercially. He is going to receive some commercial benefit from that film. Out of the money that he gets, he is required to pay royalties both to the owner of the copyright material, and to the performer who is performing that work.

Now suppose he does not sell that film. Say it's JBC and they are doing it for a charity show. They are not making money from the film and they are not making money from the show, and they say 'we can't pay the performer or the creator of the original material'.

There are, quite naturally, exceptions to copyright. In other words, there are certain circumstances in which the right would not arise because of exceptions written into the legislation. If it were a case where these exceptions arose, then that obligation to pay royalty would not exist. That notwithstanding, it would seem to me that it would be between the corporation and the individual artist, or the owner of the copyright and the performer to come to some arrangement, indicating to them whether it is for charity or whatever. I personally would like to see a situation in which — if the corporation intends to have an educational section — all material used there would be free of any copyright obligation on that particular channel. This has been mooted and I have suggested that it be included in the legislation as well. Whether it is, remains to be seen.

What I would like to do now is to say a brief word about the question of sound recordings. In the United Kingdom, as I indicated earlier on, the makers of sound recordings, by the interpretation of the courts originally and then subsequently by the 1956 legislation, by Section 12 in fact, have been given a general copyright for sound recordings. That is to say, the copyright that the maker of this plastic disc receives is similar to any other copyright. It is a general copyright.

The result is that the maker of this disc is entitled to receive money, for example, for public performance. So that, if a record is played in a discotheque in London, the owner of that disc is entitled to a royalty for public performance. By some quirk this has been adopted in Jamaica, principally because of pressure from the manufacturers of discs, and the position now in Jamaica is that the makers of sound recordings by interpretation of the 1911 Act, enjoy a general copyright on their products. The result, as I indicated, is that they are entitled to collect public performance royalties, so they are entitled to collect from the radio stations, the discotheques, from the juke boxes. All of this — while the performer is not entitled to collect. So when a record station plays a record by, say, John Brown on the Griwax label, the radio station is required to pay Griwax a royalty but is not required to pay John Brown a royalty. This position I personally believe is iniquitous and should not be allowed to continue. I think that the makers of sound recordings should naturally be protected against unauthorized copying. I don't think they should be given any further right; this would be burdensome and unnecessary to trade. It is interesting to note that presently only a few of the manufacturers of records — four in fact — collect a pool from the radio stations and they have over a period of years tried to donate a portion of this money to what they regard as some charity. They have made no effort to collect from discotheques or juke boxes, not because they do not want the money, but they realise it would almost be impossible for them — as the manufacturers — to monitor and collect it.

What does registration for copyright purposes mean?

Copyright— the rights that flow under copyright legislation, the rights that flow under the 1911 legislation, for example — begins, as it were, to flow from the time that the work is created. In other words, if I sit in my home and I write a little poem or a song, from the time that that song is written, conceived and put into some material form, protection flows under the legislation. Now there have been moves in many nations to require registration as a prerequisite to protection. By registration, I refer to the process of registering or filing a copy with a central organization, as a prerequisite to any protection whatsoever. The only country where this operates effectively is the United States. Most other countries do not require registration and in fact some of the international conventions explicitly prohibit compulsory registration. Compulsory registration, of course, is the situation where there is no protection unless there is registration. In our situation, optional registration has been looked at and I hope that is employed. It is the system whereby one is not required to register one's work for protection, but registration would prove a prima facie case if the question of ownership ever was brought up. So that, if an artist — John Strokes — registers his works and it is claimed by Peter Smith, then the onus would be on Peter Smith to prove ownership against the person who has already registered the work. As I indicated, there are three possible permutations for registration (1) as a formality required for the subsistence of copyright (2) as a mandatory formality without effect on the subsistence of copyright, or (3) optional registration which I think Jamaica should go for — an optional formality for the sake of prima facie evidence only.

What about folklore and copyright?

The question of folklore and copyright protection is one

which is very vexing, particularly for developing countries. This is because the onus has been thrown essentially on the developing countries to implement processes for the protection of folklore within the bounds of their own nations and within the international copyright community itself. The developed nations are not going to be concerned over the question of the protection of folklore. There are those who suggest that developed nations have already exploited their folklore to such an extent that they do not now seek to protect it. The onus is therefore on the developing states like Jamaica who have very vibrant folklores, very vibrant heritages, to seek the methods and the means of protecting this folklore. Within the membership of our committee, we naturally have folklore specialists who have put several points to the committee for the protection of folklore. The committee looked very closely at the problems of the protection of folklore; and I should indicate to you that while folklore is protected under the Tunis Model Law compiled for developing countries, it has not really been implemented, it has not come into effect because of the problems involved. The most recent legislation of Barbados, I think that is the 1982 legislation, quite surprisingly to me had adopted the protection of folklore within that legislation. I think that they are going to have a lot of problems with it and I would imagine that it will be one of the areas of their legislation which will not be thoroughly implemented.

What are the problems?

The problems of folklore start from the point at which you begin to look at the topic. First of all, there is the problem of identifying what is folklore. Even our experts find great difficulty in coming up with a definition that is inclusive of the aspect of the heritage which we are trying to protect, and at the same time, does not restrict the development and growth of this heritage.

The necessity for properly identifying folklore becomes apparent when you realise that the alternative to protecting folklore is to have it within the public domain. That is to say, having it available for free use by members of the society. So that once you get over the problem of identifying exactly what is folklore and what should be protected under the copyright legislation, you are going to run into a whole series of other problems. Principal among these is the question of the certification of the work, the question of the cost involved in the storage, cataloguing and retrieval of the work — once they are certified as being folklore — and also a mechanism for dealing with objections. There are bound to be people who will come along and say — "No, this is not folklore — for which I am to be required to pay 10 cents per copy. It is in the public domain and therefore I am entitled to the free use of it". You have to have a mechanism for the solution of these problems. Even if you get over all the problems involved in protecting folklore within the boundaries of your own state, you have the problem of receiving international protection for your folklore. There is at the moment no mechanism within any of the international conventions for the protection of folklore.

So that although Jamaica can protect folklore within its own boundaries, we are involved in a self-defeating process because we cannot protect it outside the shores of our country. So you might have a situation where you retard the growth of your folklore within the bounds of your nation, while your folklore continues to be exploited on the international market. So there is no actual process for the

protection of folklore internationally. This brings me now to a series of meetings recently held on the question of folklore, the most recent of which was held in June-July 1982 in Geneva and at which Jamaica was ably represented by Shirley Miller, Director of Legal Reform and our resident folklorist in the Office of the Prime Minister, Olive Lewin. It was sponsored by the World Intellectual Property Organization and UNESCO. It had as its principal object discussions amongst people interested in protecting folklore which, by definition, means people of the Third World or developing countries, concerning the solutions for the protection of folklore nationally, and also for the protection of folklore internationally, under the conventions.

I believe that Jamaica should wait and watch, take part in the international discussions on folklore, not rush ahead as Barbados has done, but to remain patient and to involve ourselves in the discussions, make our input into these discussions, and examine closely the end result.

What is the philosophy of copyright?

The whole question of copyright legislation, the creation of good copyright legislation is a balancing act. Between the interests of the creators of the artistic works and the society as a whole it is a balancing act. What one has to seek to do is to create incentives for the producers of intellectual property so that they produce more, building up the heritage, building up the reservoir of heritage in the society, building up the reservoir of intellectual property in terms of music, art and literature, etc., making it profitable for them to spend their time doing this, creating a situation where they can live off this work which we recognize as being legitimate work, and the need for society to have access to this material in order to progress. So that the balancing act is there. A balance must be found whereby society can get this material for educational purposes for the development of its heritage, its culture, and must have as free access to this material as possible, while on the other hand, the creator must be able to live from his work.

Do you want to say a few words about the international conventions?

Copyright protection flows from national legislation; essentially, this legislation protects the works of nationals within the boundaries of their own particular country. If one seeks protection in other parts of the world, then it becomes necessary to seek protection under international conventions, bilateral conventions, bilateral agreements, or multilateral conventions. Initially the approach taken was that states entered into bilateral agreements. Originally the development of this international protection took place in the form of bilateral arrangement between individual states, extended later to regional agreements. There are principally two — the Berne Convention established in 1886 and the Universal Copyright Convention established in 1952. The majority of the countries of the world belong to one or the other, some belong to both. As a result, their works are protected internationally. Jamaica belongs to neither. So that Jamaican works receive limited protection now in Jamaica, under the 1911 Act and receive no international protection whatsoever. I think that there is nothing inherently wrong with Jamaica joining both the conventions. There is nothing startling or frightening about that and I think that Jamaica should endeavour to do so, providing, of course, that the conventions are acceptable to us and our provisions acceptable to them.

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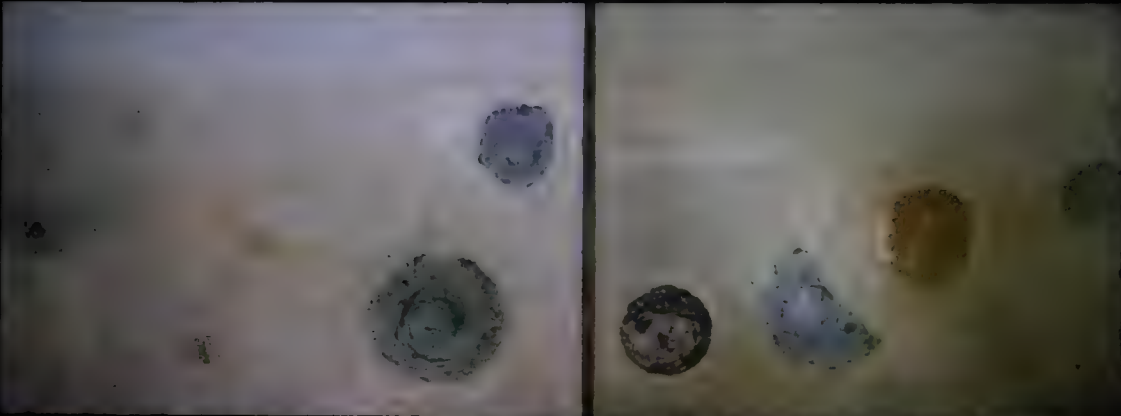
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Fitz Harrack, *We Belong Together*, 1982. Terra cotta. 10" x 18".
Collection: Bank of Credit and Commerce International.



Hope Brooks, *Jellyfish*, 1982 (Diptych). Mixed media on canvas. 48" x 64 1/2". Collection: Mr. and Mrs. Errol Hall.



George Rodney, *Datum*, 1982. Acrylic on canvas. 51" x 74". Collection: Mr. Guy McIntosh.

Jamaica's Flowering Plants:

The Five Endemic Genera

By Peter Bretting

Introduction

Those plants and animals found only in Jamaica (in biological terminology, those *endemic* to the island) are an often overlooked part of Jamaica's heritage. As an evolutionary biologist specializing in plants, I find Jamaica's endemic flowering plants (*angiosperms* in botanical parlance) particularly fascinating. I recently surveyed what is known of them and found that of about 3000 angiosperm species in Jamaica ca. 790 or ca. 27 per cent, are endemic. Five of the ca. 1000 genera (0.5 per cent), but none of the ca. 184 families found in Jamaica, are endemic [Adams 1972].

It is important here to discuss the categories 'species' (singular and plural), 'genus' (plural 'genera') and 'family'. They form a ranked hierarchy: a family is composed of genera, which in turn are composed of species, the latter of which comprise closely related plant populations. The scientific name for a species is always a binomial, with the first part of the name generic. The proper specific epithet always includes both the generic name and that which follows. Generic and specific names are easily recognizable because they are always underlined or in italics; names of families may be recognized by the standard suffix "-aceae". Breadfruit (*Artocarpus altilis*) and jackfruit (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*) provide a concrete example of this arrangement. They are clearly variants (scientifically speaking, species) of a type of tree with a particular well-defined structural plan that botanists designate as the genus *Artocarpus*. Nearly everyone can easily distinguish these two *Artocarpus*



species from other genera (e.g., *Cecropia* — trumpet tree, *Ficus* — figs) in the family Moraceae.

In the following pages, I will focus upon Jamaica's five endemic angiosperm genera. They were chosen for a subject because i) Jamaica lacks endemic angiosperm families, so that 'genus' is the 'highest' classificatory category with endemic members ii) *Portlandia* (named after Margaret, Duchess of Portland (1715 - 1785) an early supporter of botany) only recently (1979) has been recognized as endemic, so an appraisal of the five genera seemed timely iii) the plethora of endemic Jamaican species prohibits their being the subject of a short article such as this! I have relied heavily upon the works of well-known students of Jamaican and Caribbean botany such as C.D. Adams, R.A. Howard, and G.R. Proctor, but the interpretations and conclusions presented here are mine.

Endemic Jamaican Genera

The five genera of flowering plants endemic to Jamaica comprise a most interesting assemblage. *Tetrasiphon jamaicensis* (Celastraceae) has no common name, probably because of its rarity. The closely related genus *Gyminda* (with 2 - 3 species from the West Indies and Central America) is called 'false boxwood' [Tomlinson 1980] so perhaps we can refer to *Tetrasiphon* as 'Jamaican false boxwood'. This tree grows upon limestone in low-lying (100-300 feet above sea level) thickets in arid parts of St. Andrew and St. Thomas. Mature individuals may reach 30 feet, and can be identified by their

vertically striped bark, square twigs, and elliptical leaves densely covered on the upper surface by brownish hairs. Small (¼ inch wide) yellowgreen flowers appear in January and February, and again in early summer (June). Dark purple, one-seeded, fleshy fruits (botanically, 'drupes') ripen during the same months. Interestingly, this tree is dioecious [Adams 1972] that is, a tree bears only 'male' flowers (with functional pollen) or only 'female' flowers (with functional ovaries and eggs).

Acanthodesmos distichus (Asteraceae), another Jamaican endemic genus, grows in poorly drained clay soil at the edge of coastal salt pans in Clarendon. The generic name *Acanthodesmos* is derived from the Greek root (*acanthos*) for 'spine', referring to the bristly appearance of this profusely branched, perennial shrub. Its lanceolate ('lance-shaped') leaves are dark green with a dense white wooly coat underneath. They are borne on the stem opposite to groups of pale lavender-white flowers surrounded by bristly spines. Flowering and fruiting occur from mid-autumn to late spring. This rare shrub is perhaps related to *Spiracantha* (with species from Central and South America) or *Rolandra* (with species from Puerto Rico, the Lesser Antilles, and continental America). However, the precise affinities of *Acanthodesmos* are far from clear at present [Adams and du Quesnay 1971].

Jacaima costata (Asclepiadaceae) had the dubious distinction of being 'lost' for almost 50 years! Originally discovered in the early 1900s on Long Mountain (St. Andrew), it was not re-collected until 1958 when it was again found on Long Mountain [Adams 1971]. Later biological surveys of the Hellshire Hills (St. Catherine) revealed several additional populations. So now it is thought that small colonies of this twining vine are scattered in many arid coastal thickets upon limestone. The name *Jacaima* is an anagram of 'Jamaica'. According to the rules of botanical nomenclature, plants cannot be given the exact name of any political or geographical unit, so Albert Rendle slightly altered 'Jamaica' to honour it.

As with other plants of the Asclepiadaceae (e.g., french cotton, butterfly weed) the woody pale tan stems and pale green foliage of *Jacaima* hold copious quantities of white latex. Its thin oblong-lanceolate leaves form two rows on opposite sides of the stem. Clusters of small (ca. ¼" across) pale yellowish green flowers appear in August, and November through February. Plants in fruit have been collected in January and June-August. The fruit of *Jacaima* is quite distinctive: blue-green and fleshy when young, but at maturity ribbed, brown, teardrop-shaped, and full of seeds with hairy coats. *Jacaima* is probably akin to the Hispaniolan genus *Ptychanthera* (1 species), the Cuban genus *Poicilla* (1-4 species), and the Cuban and Hispaniolan genus *Poicillopsis* (5-6 species) but details of their interrelationship remain unknown.

Salpixintha coccinea (Acanthaceae) has a much broader range than the genera we have mentioned already, but it too is uncommon. Like other endemic genera, *Salpixintha* prefers well-drained limestone, but it is primarily an upland (1500-3000 feet) plant from western and central parishes (Clarendon, Manchester, St. Ann, and Hanover). Generally it grows as a robust shrub 3 to 10 feet tall, but some plants are tree-like. Shiny, pale green, lanceolate leaves are borne opposite one another along the smooth, pale tan twigs. From September until April, spikes of brilliant scarlet, tubular flowers sprout from the end of twigs and droop downward. Its capsular fruits, which mature from December to July, are typical for the family Acanthaceae. As they dry, the cap-

sules spread open and pitch out four seeds with the aid of specialized stalks attached to the seeds. *Geissomeria* (with 15 species) of South and Central America is perhaps the genus closest related to *Salpixintha*.

Portlandia (Rubiaceae — common name: bellflower) differs from the other four endemic Jamaican genera in that it contains five species, one having two varieties [Aiello 1979]. All the various types of bellflower seem to prefer limestone or limestone-derived soil at elevations of sea level to 2500 feet. One species or another can be found in every Jamaican parish. The upland montane forests of the shale-derived soils in the Blue Mountains are apparently the only natural woodlands lacking this genus.

All bellflowers are shrubs or small trees with smooth-margined, leathery, shiny, ovate, elliptic or circular leaves borne in two opposite rows along the twigs. Their capsular fruits dry and split when ripe, exposing 150-300 small, angled seeds. Judging from its fruit and seed, *Portlandia* is considered very closely related to *Isidorea* (with 11 species from Hispaniola and eastern Cuba) [Aiello 1979].

Both *Portlandia microsepala* and *Portlandia coccinea* flower January through April, fruit sporadically throughout the rest of the year, and bear unscented, tubular, red-scarlet flowers. *P. microsepala* has been collected in upland St. Ann (ca. 2000' elevation), whereas *P. coccinea* inhabits rocky cliffs at 500-2000 feet in St. Catherine, St. Elizabeth, Trelawny, Westmoreland, Manchester, and St. James. In September, *Portlandia harrisii* bears fragrant pink flowers with a tubular blossom that flares slightly. It is a rare species, found above 2000 feet in Clarendon and St. Ann. The remaining two species, *Portlandia platantha* and *Portlandia grandiflora*, both bear white flowers with a strong fragrance likened to *Gardenia* [Aiello 1979]. Their tubular blossoms flare considerably; flowering and fruiting occurs nearly year-round. Both species can be considered fairly common in thickets at elevations of sea-level to 2000 feet. *P. platantha* is most frequently found at low elevations along the coasts of St. Ann, St. Mary, Kingston, St. Andrew, Portland, and St. Thomas, whereas *P. grandiflora* grows along the coasts and inland in every parish but Kingston, St. James, Portland, and St. Thomas.

Origins of Endemic Genera and Their Future Prospects

Jamaica's endemic angiosperm genera provide some insight into the origin of the Jamaican flora, and its future prospects. First, and most important, their natural history bears witness to the profound evolutionary consequences of Jamaica's insularity. Jamaica is an oceanic island, having arisen from the ocean depths as the result of volcanic action and subsequent reef-building. Cuba and Hispaniola are nearby, but Jamaica has always been separated from them by salt water, perhaps the most effective barrier to plant migration [Carlquist 1965]. *Jacaima*, *Tetrasiphon*, and *Portlandia* all are considered most closely related to plants from Cuba or Hispaniola, Jamaica's nearest neighbours.

In the past, much of Central America's undersea continental shelf and many of the presently submerged banks (e.g., Pedro, Rosalind, Gorda) southwest of Jamaica were dry land [Lack 1976], meaning that Jamaica was effectively 'nearer' to Central America than at present. With this geological history, it is perhaps not surprising that all of Jamaica's endemic angiosperm genera show relationships to genera from Central America, the mainland closest (and once closer) to Jamaica.



Fig. 13.—*Tetrasiphon jamaicensis* Urb.

A, End of branch with leaves and flowers x 5.
B, Portion of inflorescence x 5.
C, Male flower x 10.
D, Female flower x 10.
E, Ditto cut lengthwise x 10.
F, Drupe cut lengthwise x 2.
G, Embryo x 3.

Tetrasiphon jamaicensis (from Fawcett and Rendle Flora of Jamaica, volume 5, 1926, p.31.)



Salpixintha coccinea (from Curtis Botanical Magazine 71: t 4 158 (1845))



Portlandia grandiflora (from C.D. Adams: The Blue Mahoe and Other Bush Sangsters - McGraw Hill, 1971).



Acanthodesmos

NOTE: "More additions to the flora of Jamaica" by Dr. G.R. Proctor (*J. Arnold Arboretum* 63 (3): 199-315, 1982) appeared while this article was in proof. Dr. Proctor adds a new species to the endemic *Jacaima* and reports that B. Nordenstam (*Opera Botanica* 44: 1-83, 1978) has recognized two new endemic angiosperm genera for Jamaica. More in the next issue of Jamaica Journal.

Ferns [Tryon 1979], birds [Lack 1976], and angiosperm species [Stearn 1957; Howard 1973] show the same pattern of very strong affinities with Antillean species or genera, and weaker but detectable relationships with Central American plants or animals. This supports the contention that the flora and fauna of the Antilles make up a unified biological province quite distinct from Central, North, and South American provinces, but most closely related to the Central American province [Lack 1976; Stearn 1957].

Given that close relatives to Jamaica's endemic genera are located on the islands nearby, it would seem that the probability of successful dispersal and establishment has strongly determined the character of Jamaica's flora. Unlike coconuts (*Cocos nucifera*) or seaside mahoes (*Thespesia* or *Hibiscus*) none of Jamaica's endemic angiosperm genera has fruit or seed adapted for regular dispersal by the sea. *Tetrasiphon* has fleshy fruit seemingly attractive to birds, so perhaps its seeds or those of its ancestors rode to Jamaica by chance in a bird's gizzard. The tiny seeds of *Portlandia*, *Salpixintha*, and the fuzzy seeds of *Jacaima* may have been blown to Jamaica by the wind. *Acanthodesmos* has apparently adapted to the harsh conditions of coastal salt ponds. These are frequented by migratory waterfowl, so that the small fruit of *Acanthodesmos* or its ancestors may have adhered to plumage or feet and reached Jamaica by air.

Successful dispersal of plants lacking special adaptations must have been a rare event. Like most angiosperm genera endemic to the Antilles [Howard 1973] those endemic to Jamaica contain few species and belong to profoundly different and distantly related angiosperm families. Jamaica's endemic genera hence resemble a random sample of the total flora, reinforcing the idea that the probability of dispersal was so low that it approached statistical randomness.

It is notable that most of Jamaica's endemic angiosperm genera grow in woodlands upon limestone or limestone-derived soil. Apparently, most of Jamaica's endemic species also prefer this habitat [Adams 1971], suggesting that it is so different from the ecological niches on neighbouring Antillean islands that unique adaptations were necessary for survival, and endemic species or genera resulted. The fate of all Jamaica's endemic angiosperm genera (except perhaps *Acanthodesmos*) is thus intimately associated with the fate of native limestone woodlands.

Portlandia, with two fairly common species (*P. grandiflora* and *P. platantha*), is presently in little danger of extinction. But two species, *P. harrisii* and *P. microsepala*, are each known from only four localities [Aiello 1979] in the woodlands of upper St. Ann and Clarendon. Those sites should be monitored closely for the *Portlandia* species and for *Salpixintha coccinea*, which is rare there and further westward.

Salpixintha, *Portlandia microsepala*, and *Portlandia coccinea* bear conspicuous tubular, scarlet flowers that are odorless. Although no reliable observations are on record, it seems evident from studies of other plants with similar morphology that these Jamaican species are pollinated by hummingbirds [Faegri and van der Pijl 1979; Aiello 1979]. Destruction of the hummingbird's habitat could lead to drastic reduction in plant species, such as those above, which may need the birds for reproduction. Fortunately, Jamaican hummingbirds are still quite common, and Jamaica's avifauna has remained stable for the last 150 years [Lack 1976].

Judging from their floral structure, *Tetrasiphon*, *Jacaima* and *Acanthodesmos* are probably pollinated by a wide variety

of insects (e.g. bees, solitary bees, butterflies, thrips) which are common in the lowland scrub of Jamaica's southern coast [Faegri and van der Pijl 1979; Percival 1974]. Hence these plants' survival would not appear to be threatened by lack of pollinators. But, these three genera are much rarer than *Portlandia* and *Salpixintha*, and may warrant special protection. *Tetrasiphon* and *Jacaima* grow in arid coastal thickets where, because of recent drought, fires often burn unchecked. Trees, such as *Tetrasiphon*, are being cut by charcoal burners at an alarming rate. Reduction in the number of dioecious *Tetrasiphon* trees is especially alarming, because at least two are needed to maintain any population. As a twining vine *Jacaima* depends upon other plants for structural support so that destruction of trees may also endanger its survival.

An eminent student of island life, Sherwin Carlquist, has remarked: "I have continually noticed how very little, really, is known about most island plants and animals" [1965 p.vii]. Compared to other islands, Jamaica's flora has been relatively well-studied [Adams 1972] but less than 10 years ago fewer than 10 per cent of the genera found in the Antilles and northern South America had been investigated from a modern evolutionary viewpoint [Howard 1973]. Even less is known of pollinator-plant relationships, population dynamics, breeding systems, and ecological requirements of endemic Jamaican plants. Hence the careful reader has noted the many qualified statements in this article. Concrete statements can only be made after extensive study: research that will provide information needed to appreciate and protect Jamaica's natural history heritage.

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We would be grateful to hear from any reader who can help us to locate illustrations of any of these indigenous genera.

Leonard P. Howell

Introduction

In the first half of 1981, two events occurred that symbolized the historical passage of Rastafari religion from its original lowly status as a persecuted peasant sect in Jamaica in the 1930s into today's resonant world-wide movement. Although the first event went by for the most part unheralded, it serves symbolically to frame the Rastafari experience at its point of origin. This was the death in February of Leonard Percival Howell (b. 1898), whose influence predominated in the emergence of Rastafarian ideology between 1933 and 1940. Howell's passing was followed within a few months by another event which was massively observed, namely, the death of Bob Marley (b. 1945), the most famous Rastafarian ever. In his poetic 'Redemption Song', recorded on his final album *Uprising*, Bob Marley exulted in the triumph of the dread vision of Rastafari prophecy:

... my hand was made strong
By the hand of the Almighty
We forward in this generation
triumphantly.

Bob Marley's reggae lyrics thus express the Rastafari experience at its apogee. Punctuated throughout its complex history by many dramatic changes which have affected both the social make-up of the movement as well as its doctrinal expression, the Rastafari movement represents, according to one recent commentator, 'a puzzling phenomenon'. "That there has been evolution (of doctrine) seems quite evident", notes

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Leonard P. Howell

National Library of Jamaica

another commentator, "but to trace the exact stages of that evolution would be as difficult as it would be valuable."

It is the aim of this paper to attempt a brief recapitulation of the emergence of the millenarian visions in early Rastafari religion, in the hope that a clarification of their genesis might provide not only illumination of the character of the original phenomena in relation to their specific Jamaican context, but also underscore the gradual shift in the character of the movement that developed afterwards. By paying close attention to the historical details of the movement's original outbreak in the eastern Jamaican parish of St. Thomas, I hope to offer an

analysis of the role of Leonard Percival Howell in the context of the Jamaican peasant origins of the millenarian impetus of the Rastafari phenomenon.

However, it is necessary at the outset to call into question the semi-canonical status which scholars have conferred on the section of the report by M.G. Smith, Roy Augier and Rex Nettleford, *The Ras Tafari Movement in Kingston, Jamaica*, entitled "History of the Movement". An example of the nearly universal acceptance accorded this work is the statement by Barry Chevannes that "the role played by the first Rastafarians is treated adequately in Smith *et al.*". In spite of the reservation called to the attention of scholars by Ken Post, whose own limited research led him to the conclusion that the report's "historical material must be treated with some care", the view expressed by Chevannes has been the one that is now the standard wisdom.

The truth is that the report by Smith *et al.* did not have as its main purpose the history of the Rastafari movement but rather the presentation of specific policy recommendations to the Jamaican government of the day. The hope was that it would guide public policy in the context of the crisis to which the state of emergency declared in April 1960 to deal with the attempted insurgency of the Rev. Claudius Henry ('The Repairer of the Breach') and that of his son, Reynold Henry had given rise. This was clearly spelled out in the report itself; according to the authors, they undertook "to work among (the Rastafari brethren) for a fortnight in order to determine the predominant needs of the brethren and to formulate a programme of action". To the extent that the report was concerned with the development of the movement, its main concern was to examine the specific changes that had occurred in the nature of the cult since it

and Millenarian Visions in Early Rastafari

was first studied in 1953 by the American anthropologist, George Eaton Simpson. Indeed, the authors were forced to note that Professor Simpson's studies paid "little attention to the history, organization or background of the movement". The result has been described as "a rapid survey among the Ras Tafari brethren of Kingston during the fortnight beginning on July 4th, 1960". It was certainly a remarkable feat for any team of three authors to have researched and written such a 'survey' within the space of a fortnight. But when their findings were presented on 20 July to the Premier of Jamaica, N.W. Manley, by the Principal of what was then the University College of the West Indies, W. Arthur Lewis, it was accompanied with a forwarding letter stating that "the team has made a number of recommendations which require urgent consideration", and also drawing attention to the fact that "the movement is large, and in a state of great unrest".

Both the overriding political purpose of the report's policy recommendations as well as the manner of its hurried preparation — the document was actually written in a night and a day — would suggest, at a minimum, that its historical data must be treated with great caution. Nonetheless, scholars have allowed themselves to be lulled by the apparent rigor of the report's findings into chronic historical myopia, and from this failure of historical perspective the origins of Rastafari religion have become trapped in anachronism and reductionism of the worst kind. Thus, without necessarily intending it, the report by Smith *et al.* has had the unfortunate consequence of foreclosing rather than stimulating an attitude of enquiry into the specifics of Rastafari origins.

For an appreciation of this limiting quality of the historical description contained in *The Ras Tafari Movement*, it is



enough to call attention to the report's statement: "For the Ras Tafari brethren today, Garvey is a major prophet, but his relationship with the founders of the Ras Tafari movement between 1930 and 1935 remains obscure". The historical connection between Garvey and early Rastafari religion, however, is made even more problematic by the confusion created by the report in its use of oral testimony gathered from interviews with 'some Jamaicans of a Garveyite persuasion', whose accounts the report made no attempt to corroborate by checking the documentary sources. At best, this method only results in the substitution of largely apocryphal statements in place of verifiable historical data. And yet the slip-page of the myth into the historical record is something of which most scholars still seem unaware.

The assumption of *The Ras Tafari*

By Robert Hill

Movement that it was Garvey who provided the originating impulse of the Rastafari millenarian vision rested on the statements that "Garvey is said to have told his people to 'Look to Africa, when a black king shall be crowned, for the day of deliverance is near' ". The report further claims that following the prince regent of Ethiopia, Ras Tafari Makonnen being crowned Emperor Haile Selassie I in October 1930, "some Jamaicans of a Garveyite persuasion say that they began to consult their Bibles". This they did presumably with Garvey's prophecy still fresh in their minds, so that they asked themselves: "Could this be he of whom Garvey spoke?"

No evidence has so far been found or cited to show that Garvey ever made the assertion attributed to him. What has been found, however, is something similar recorded in an address which was delivered by a black clergyman, Rev. James Morris Webb, in September 1924. The gist of the Rev. Webb's message was actually contained in the second of his two works on the subject of blacks in sacred history, which was entitled *A Black Man Will Be The Coming Universal King, Proven by Biblical History*. In his Liberty Hall speech, the Rev. Webb repeated this prophecy:

The head of Great Britain will do as the Kaiser did and attempt to rule as universal king. Then the nations which were Great Britain's allies in the World War — Belgium, France and America — will join to crush Great Britain. The universal black king will then appear and dominate all. He will tear down all their claims . . . The world cannot realize this now. It will take time. When the prophetic part of the Bible is preached the world will realize that the universal black king is coming . . .

At the same time, this prophecy by the Rev. Webb of a coming 'universal black king' does not appear to have reached Jamaica or to have achieved



currency in terms of any residual influence in the popular interpretation of the coronation event of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1930. It is possible, however, to trace the source of the apocryphal story of Garvey's so-called prophecy to the account given to the authors of *The Ras Tafari Movement* by Paul Earlington, whom the report described as having belonged to what it called the 'somewhat more secular stream' of Rastafarians inhabiting the 'Dungle' in Kingston. When he was interviewed by the present writer in July 1978, Earlington continued to maintain that "the Honourable Marcus Garvey always told us that there was a man coming forward behind him whose shoe-heel he, the Honourable Marcus Garvey, would not be able to unleash". Ironically, however, he maintains that in spite of this he never considered himself a Rastafarian, yet this was in fact how the report by Smith *et al* described him. His main activity was providing the stimulus behind the organization of the first local of the Ethiopian World Federation in Jamaica (Local 17).

Ethiopianism

Far more significant than the search for any specific prophecy or prophecies as the determinant of Rastafari origins is the underlying identification which blacks have consistently made with Ethiopia by virtue of its Biblical symbolism. This tradition is best summed up in the oft-repeated thirty-first verse of the sixty-eighth Psalm, "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God". Practically all forms of black redemptive ideology have been suffused with this Ethiopianism, so that its compass was historically much broader than Garveyism. What the Ethiopian emperor's coronation in 1930 did was to stir into being a new phase of Ethiopianism among blacks. It consequently revived a number of varied Ethiopianist ideas that had become dormant by the end of the 1920s. By providing a new justification for political and spiritual faith in

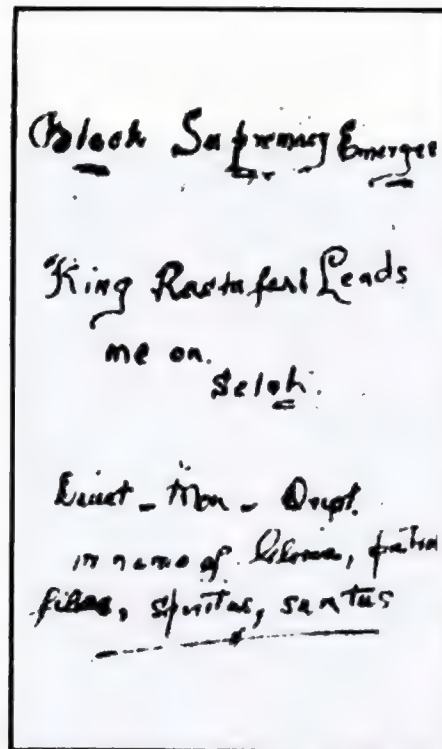


Fig. 1: The reappearance of 'Black Supremacy' in the picture postcard of Emperor Haile Selassie I (overleaf) circulated by B.L. Wilson, an early associate of Leonard P. Howell. The full phrase was "Black Supremacy Emerges, Ras-tafari the Lion of Judah Reigneth".

Ethiopia, the coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie thus allowed Garvey's doctrine of racial redemption to fuse inside this broad renewal of faith.

It was in this context that the far-reaching influence of Garvey's message can be said to have paved the way for the emergence of a new wave of millenarian beliefs in Ethiopia's link with divinity. The synthesis that ensued between Garvey's vision of 'African Redemption' and a revived Ethiopianism after 1930 was first signalled on Sunday 4 January 1931, with the appearance in Harlem of a joint street parade in which Garvey's UNIA followers marched alongside a phalanx of Black Jews. After holding religious services to pay tribute to their heroes, the march paraded through Harlem with framed life-size photographs

of both Garvey and Selassie carried at the front, side by side. Just prior to that, a British official on his return to England from the United States observed in October 1931 in a letter to the Foreign Office that "there is a tendency amongst the American negroes to look up to Haile Selassie [*sic*] as the outstanding figure-head of their race". The official described what he had observed as "a mutual bond of interest and racial sympathy between the Emperor and a section of the American negro population".

On the day that the news was published in Jamaica "that the Prince of Abyssinia has now been crowned as Emperor of that country, and that among his many titles is 'Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Elect of God, and the Light of the World' ", there appeared also a lengthy editorial commentary in the *Daily Gleaner* which, despite the sarcasm, did contain a revealing disclosure. "The new Abyssinian Emperor may be King of Ethiopia, as he claims", the editorial noted, "but in that case what becomes of the claim of a fellow Jamaican, still living, to be the President of Ethiopia?" And the editorial asked, "Will our friend Rev. Nathaniel Jacobs allow the title of Lion of the Tribe of Judah to this Abyssinian monarch?"

There had been in existence in Jamaica, prior to the coronation event in Ethiopia in 1930, a considerable tradition of 'Ethiopianism' that was traceable back over a lengthy period. It could be found in such proffered claims to royal Ethiopian lineage as those put forward by 'Royal Prince Thomas Isaac Makarooroo' (Isaac Uriah Brown) and 'Prince Shervington' (Cyril Linton Mitchell), each of whom demanded official recognition of their claims. These two 'black princes' were, in fact, Jamaicans who came to public attention in 1904-06 and 1924 respectively. Ethiopianism was also manifested in the series of eight essays written by James M. Lowe of Jamaica and published in the *Crusader* in New York City in 1919-1920 under the title, "A Revealed Secret of the

Hamitic Race". It was also manifested in the formation in July 1920 of the 'Ethiopian Progressive and Co-operative Association' under the leadership of Alfred Mends and J. Mannasseh Price.

The doctrine that would provide the actual interpretative basis of Rastafari ideology, however, was contained in two books introduced into Jamaica in the period 1925-27, which the *Daily Gleaner* characterized as 'publications of the new Ethiopian religion'. The first of the two books was *The Holy Piby*, otherwise known as 'the Black Man's Bible', which was written and published by Robert Athlyi Rogers in 1924 in Newark, New Jersey. It formed the doctrinal basis of Rogers's 'Afro-Athlican Constructive Gaathly', with headquarters in Kimberley, South Africa. The Jamaican branch of the AACG went under the name 'Hamatic Church', and was established jointly in 1925 by Grace Jenkins Garrison and Rev. Charles F. Goodridge, who had encountered *The Holy Piby* originally in Colon, Panama.

According to the description in the *Daily Gleaner*, *The Holy Piby* was "a book which sets up new doctrines, and enumerates the creed of a new religion of which Marcus Garvey is pronounced the 'Apostle' ". The second book was *The Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy* published in Jamaica in 1926 by the Rev. Fitz Balintine Pettersburgh. He described the work variously as 'Ethiopia's Bible-Text' and as 'my supreme Book of Royal Rules for the Ethiopian Western Repository', and the *Daily Gleaner* described it as 'complementary to *The Holy Piby*'. In fact, it was to be plagiarized extensively by Leonard Howell throughout the greater portion of the work he entitled *The Promised Key*, in 1935. Thus, there was justification when the *Daily Gleaner* spoke of the exponents of this 'new Ethiopian religion' as persons "endeavouring to spread it here and also to indoctrinate the people of Jamaica with some seditious ideas on 'Black Supremacy' ". This was later to be the source of the phrase 'Black Supremacy'

which would reappear in the eschatology of Rastafari doctrine, as could be seen, for example, in B.L. Wilson's statement 'Black Supremacy Emerges' in 1945 (See Figure 1).

One of the Athlican sect missionaries in Jamaica, Malcolm McCormack, also remembers that it was the Rev. Pettersburgh who "used to talk about Black Supremacy, about Africa and the supremacy of the blacks", and he adds, "some of these Rastas that you hear talk about 'black supremacy' it was from him". This is also confirmed by statements found in the special appendix of *The Ras Tafari Movement in Kingston, Jamaica* (Appendix IV), which presents "a brief synopsis of the [extreme form of the] Ras Tafari doctrine". In this credal statement, phrases that are taken directly from the Rev. Pettersburgh's *Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy* recur, as, for example, the phrases 'Adam-Abraham the leper' and Jamaica as 'Mount Africa, the slave mart'. The authors of the report also refer to the belief held by members of the movement that 'the black [in Ghana's national flag] stands for black supremacy'.¹

The 1930s in Jamaica witnessed the full flowering of Ethiopianism as a broad-based popular movement. Several instances of the phenomenon can be cited. In 1933, the 'Ethiopian Guild and Brotherhood Mission' and 'Universal Black Confraternity Association' were founded, the latter under the auspices of Menelik K.O. Kandeke, Sr., who stated that membership was 'opened exclusively to Black Peoples of every Nationality'. The movement came to a head with the emergence of the Rastafari movement in 1933-34, and the mass mobilization around the crisis of the Italo-Ethiopian War of 1935-36. Popular interest in Ethiopia was also stimulated by the extensive series of articles written by L.F.C. Mantle and published in *Plain Talk* (described as 'the People's defender') from July to November 1935, all under the title "In Defense of Abyssinia and its History". The depth of the popular reaction at the time to the Ethiopian

crisis was such that Mantle felt obliged to submit the events to the test of prophecy with the result that he, too, embraced the divinity of the Ethiopian emperor. In his essay published on 2 November 1935, Mantle thus wrote:

I beg to inform you hypocrites [referring to the clergy] that what you have taught us about Jesus, is fulfilling in the land of Ethiopia right now: with the said same Romans or so called Italian or Fascist. These are the said people who crucified Jesus 2,000 years ago, and as we read that after 2,000 years, Satan's kingdom or organization shall fall; and righteousness shall prevail in all the earth, as the waters cover the sea . . . we are now in the time that the 2,000 years have expired.

Mantle then quoted in a sequential fashion various prophecies that he said 'explained' Haile Selassie's divinity: Rev. 5:5, Gen. 49:10, and Rev. 17:14, 19:16, 17:21. He also claimed that "the book which contained the seven seal[s]



Fig 2: The postcard reads: "Ras Tafari — King of Ethiopia — Descendant of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba — Presented by Leonard Howell — Traved. the World Through."



were loosed on Nov. 2nd 1930 at his coronation ceremony", and to this he added the injunction: "Be it understood that he had received the golden Sceptre in 1930". The purpose to be served by these prophetic pronouncements, however, was clearly to shore up belief in the invincibility of Ethiopia's cause, and so he declared, "Victory! More Victory is in our hands". The pro-Ethiopian mobilization that swept Jamaica starting in 1935 was to engage the energies of numerous organizations, including the established UNIA and a variety of free-floating street fraternities, such as the 'Ethiopian Alliance of the World' of St. William Grant (self-described as 'Knight Commander of the Order of the Nile') and Altamont Reid's 'Ethiopian Allied Defense'. Towards the end of the decade, moreover, the first Jamaica local (Local No. 17) of the Ethiopian World Federation was established in 1939, and in November of that same year a body known as the 'Ethiopian National United Defense Association, No. 1' also made its appearance.

The Start of Howell's Mission

It was into this developing appeal of Ethiopian consciousness that Leonard Percival Howell, who had lived in the United States for several years, stepped upon his return to Jamaica at the end of November 1932. Essentially, Howell was to perform the role of catalytic agent in igniting the radical millenarian consciousness that based itself on the doctrine of the divine kingship of Ethiopia's Ras Tafari. According to Paul Earlington, in an interview with the author, Howell "was the first man who came to Jamaica and introduced his Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Sellassie as Rastafari the creator of heaven and earth". Earlington notes that Howell "spread his propaganda on those precepts from St. Thomas back to Kingston and then he followed through to Pinnacle and it follows through to the point where there arose from Leonard Howell, [Robert] Hinds, [Joseph Nathaniel]

Hibbert, [Henry Archibald] Dunkley, and [Altamont] Reid."

Howell was born 16 June 1898, at May Crawle near Crooked River in the Bull Head Mountain district of upper Clarendon. He was the oldest in a family of 10 children. His father, Charles Theophilus Howell, was an independent peasant cultivator and a tailor as well; his mother, Clementina Bennett, was an agricultural labourer. Some of the details of Howell's early life, however, are difficult to pin down. He claimed to have joined the Jamaican war contingent in

Colon, Panama, and to have been sent to the army camp in Jamaica at Swallowfield in Kingston. He also claimed to have served at Port Royal and as a guard at the Bumperhall Hospital near Kingston, but "was sent back in [May or June] 1918 to Colon, Panama, by the Jamaican Government on a boat of the United Fruit Co. in order to proceed to Canada". After being in Colon only a short while, he joined the U.S. Army Transport Service as a cook and arrived in New York 28 October 1918. He was stationed for a time in San Francisco

Fig. 3: Statement by Annie M. Harvey, head of the Israelites in Jamaica.

LIFT UP YOUR HEADS.

The Lord killeth and maketh alive again,
He bringeth down to the grave and taketh up
The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich
He bringeth low and lifteth.

He raiseth up the poor out of the dust and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill; to set them among princes and to make them inherit the throne of Glory.

The pillars of the earth are the Lord's and He hath set the world upon them.
Stain your doorposts sons and daughters of Ethiopia.
Prepare your kids with unleaven bread and wait for the command.

The sound of chariots is near
The chariots from the East are now awaiting the sound of bugles from the West. Horses are harnessed, front legs lifted high; ears are pricked. Only a shake of the bridle and the world war shall begin.
Ethiopian children lift up your heads.

Oh, the music rolling onward,
Thro' the boundless regions bright,
Where the King in all His beauty
Is the glory and the light:
Where the sunshine of His presence
Every wave of sorrow stills,
And the bells are ringing
On the everlasting hills.

(Mrs.) ANNIE HARVEY,
ADVENTIST MISSIONARY.

WORLD'S GREAT LEADER TO SPEAK



SHEPHERD ATHLYI ROGERS

"Make the Black Race an economical power to save it from suffering, best service to God," saith the Gaathly Religion.

Every man and woman should hear SHEPHERD ATHLYI ROGERS, International leader of the powerful Gaathly Religion, speaking at

ESSEX HALL

BANK and RUTGER STS., NEWARK, N. J.

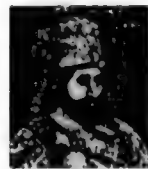
MONDAY EVE., SEPT. 28, 1925, 8 O'clock Sharp

All preachers and congregations are invited.
Admission free.

ALL ARE WELCOME

Gaathly Headquarters, The House of Athlyi, 252 Nyembane St., Kimberly, South Africa.

THE CLINTON PRESS, 8 Avon Avenue, Newark, N. J., Phone Terrace 1875



and in time he claimed to have worked aboard a total of five U.S. Army vessels before his discharge from service in 1923.

Howell took out his first papers for citizenship in the United States in May 1924, at which time he was employed as a porter. He was later employed as a construction worker at various sites on Long Island, New York, for close to five years, after which he claims that he went into business for himself at 113 W. 136th Street in Harlem, where he operated a tea room. However, persons who were in Harlem and who knew Howell during this period also recall that he was engaged in a number of nefarious practices. In particular, a number of old Garveyites stated that 'the UNIA declared against Howell in New York'. They described him as being not only a 'con-man' but also 'a samfie [obeah] man'. Z. Munroe Scarlett, an acquaintance of Howell and an official of the Jamaican UNIA, describes Howell as 'a mystic man', while Howell's brother, Hope L. Howell, informed the author that his brother "had excellent hands with sickness and helped many people, even well-to-do people, too".

Meanwhile, there was a strong likelihood that in New York Howell might have come under the influence of George Padmore, the Trinidadian who was after 1927 the rising black star of the American Communist Party. As a former seaman, Howell would have been an obvious target of the intensified communist policy at this time aimed at the recruitment of merchant seamen; and as a black man, he would also have been exposed to the various organizing drives in Harlem initiated by the Communist Party through such groups as the Harlem Workers' Center, American Negro Labor Congress, International Labor Defence (the spearhead of the Scottsboro Boys' campaign), and the League of Struggle for Negro Rights, along with publications such as the *Negro Champion* and the *Liberator*. Howell was later to correspond with Padmore from Jamaica in 1938-39, and he addressed Padmore

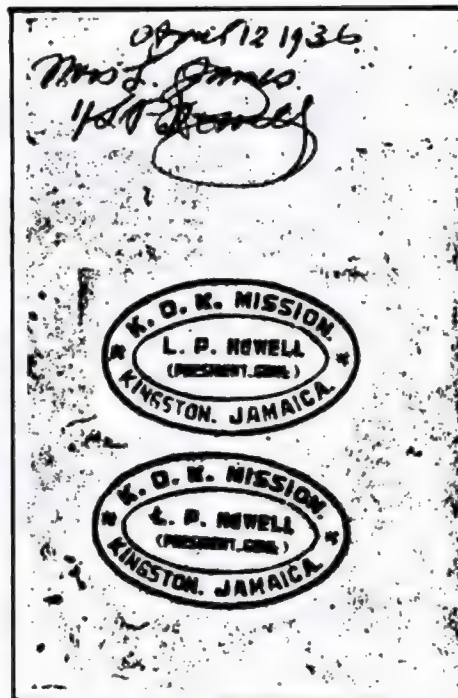


Fig. 4: The reverse side of the postcard of Ras Tafari with the official stamp of Howell's "King of King's Mission."

in terms of 'knowing you as I do'. It is significant that when Howell was interviewed in November 1940, shortly after his establishment of the Rastafarian commune at 'Pinnacle' outside of Kingston, he claimed to be leading what he termed 'a socialistic life'.

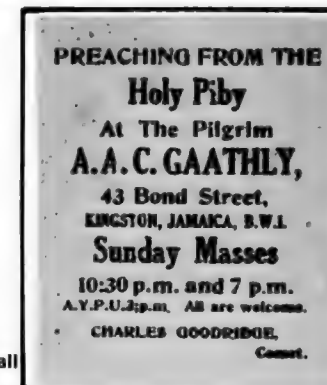
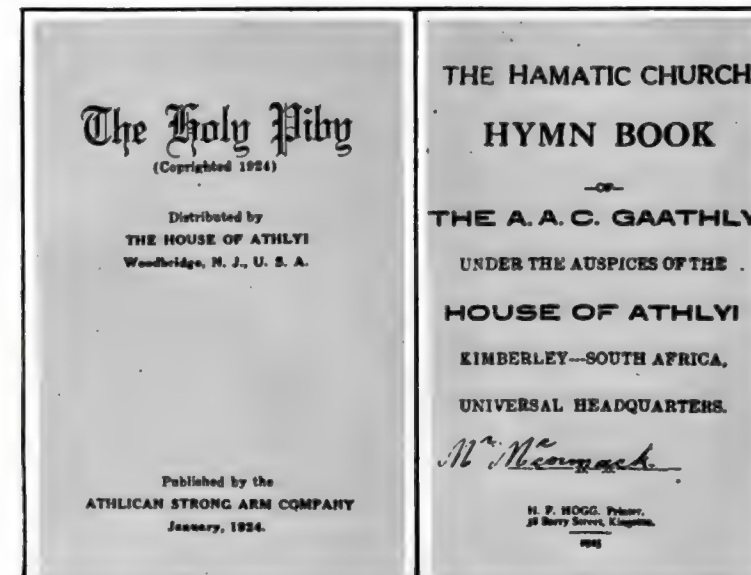
Howell's return to Jamaica actually coincided with the period of marked upsurge in religious revivalism that began during 1930-31. In January 1931, the attorney general of Jamaica submitted to the island Privy Council the draft of a 'Revivalism' or 'Shakerism' Prohibition Law, noting that "the practices are growing in all the parishes of the Island". Although the Privy Council advised against the introduction of the bill, for the reason that it would be impossible to arrive at an adequate legal definition of 'Revivalism' or 'Shakerism', the idea of introducing legislation "to prohibit the practices of these curious religious cults", in the words of the colonial secretary, would again engage the attention of the Jamaican govern-

ment in 1935 and 1937, when proposals were once more considered for the legal suppression of Pocomania and Rastafari sects.

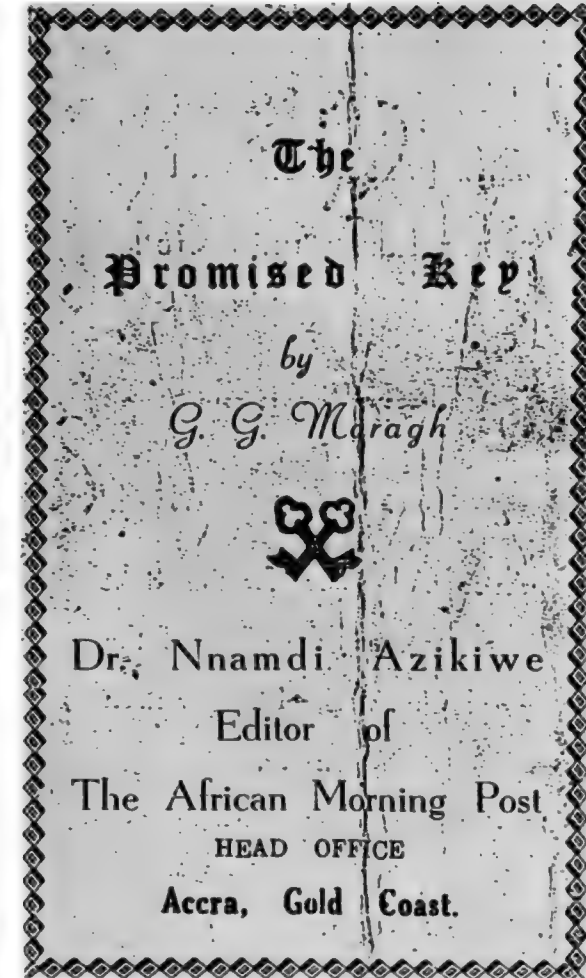
Numerous commentaries were published in local newspapers regarding the proliferation of religious revivalism in this period. In January 1930, for example, in an article in the *West Indian Critic and Review* discussing 'the Labour Problem', E.A. Glen Campbell declared that "it is regrettable that our labouring population especially in towns and villages are drifting away from the civilizing influence of the Christian Church; and following no end of strange religion that can do them no good". The same phenomenon was a constant source of complaint by Marcus Garvey, who used the editorial columns of his *New Jamaican* newspaper to attack it. On 11 August 1932, in an editorial commenting on the 'Religious Fanatic', Garvey observed that "a large number of people are leaving the established churches to join these religions — religions that howl, religions that create saints, religions that dance to frantic emotion". A few months later, on 19 October, Garvey also declared that "the various revival cults are driving a large number of [our people] crazy". Shortly after, on 25 January 1933, Garvey again declared:

Bedward attempted to fly some years ago and the people were so ignorant as to have sold nearly everything they had to go with him to Heaven on the flight. The same kind of ignorance and superstition has its grip on the people now.

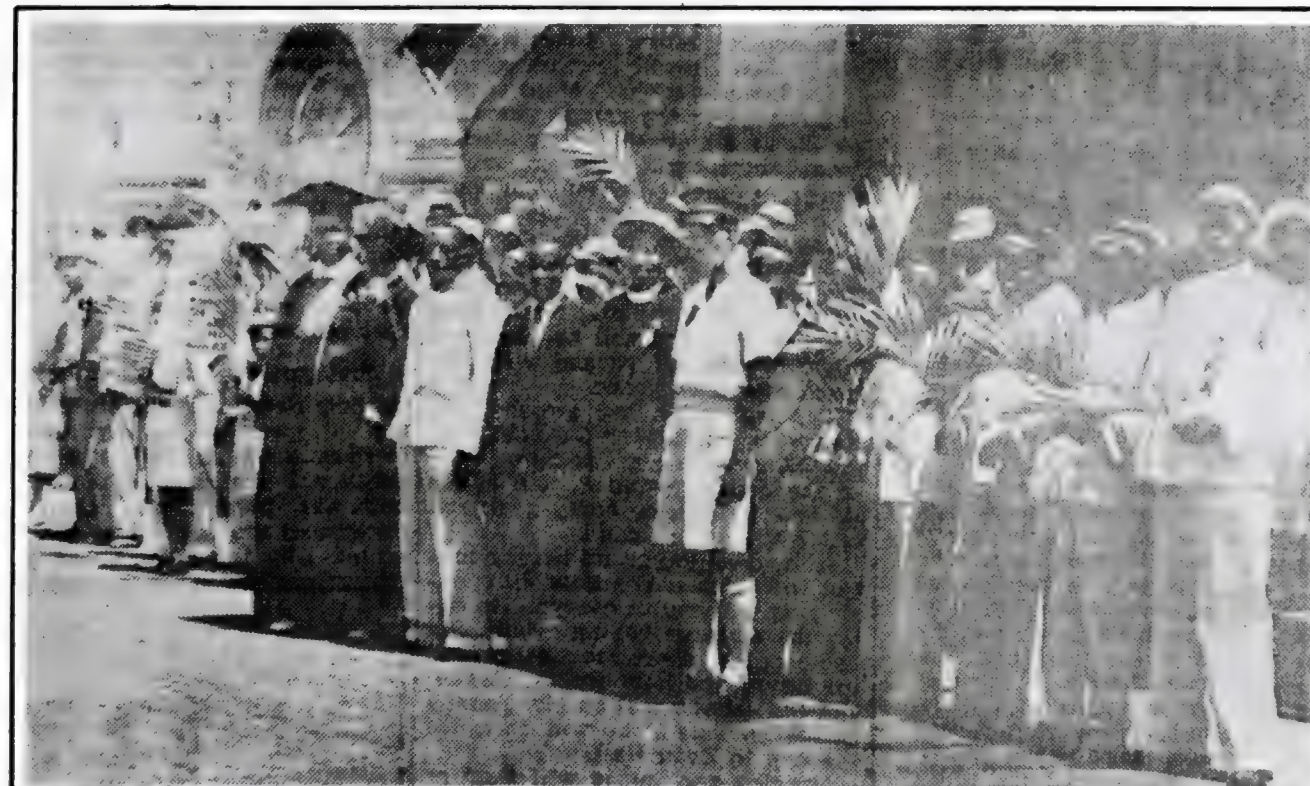
The spread of religious chiliasm among the Jamaican lower classes in this period gave cause for comment by one of the visiting delegates who was attending the UNIA's convention in August 1934. Charles L. James, president of the Gary, Indiana, division of the UNIA, told a *Daily Gleaner* interviewer: "One alarming condition that seems ridiculous to me is that 100 years after Emancipation in this country, cults and religious fanaticism are still having a grip



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National Library of Jamaica



Members of the Ethiopian World Federation marking Haile Sellassie's birthday, standing outside the Ward Theatre on the morning of Wednesday, 23 July 1941. The organizer was Paul Earlington, standing centre, next to "Prof." Bynoe, in robe and mortar board. The men were bedecked in white uniforms and the women were also dressed in spotless white.

on the island, and which forces one to pause to know that such ideas could prevail in a civilized community." He deplored the fact that "there is not enough effort on the part of the intelligencias [sic] to stamp out such evil."

This sharply critical attitude toward religious revivalism would explain Garvey's adamant refusal in early 1933, according to Z. Munroe Scarlett, to allow Leonard Howell "to sell the Emperor's pictures in Edelweiss Park (the headquarters of the UNIA)". Scarlett, who was the founder of the Whitfield Town Division of the UNIA in the late 1920s, states that "Howell had known Garvey in New York and had been a member of the UNIA, so when he returned to Jamaica in 1932 he came up to Edelweiss Park". He informed the present writer that Howell had "a couple of interviews with Marcus but Howell made an attempt to introduce the Emperor's picture and he was told it would not be done there, he could do it on his own platform".

Shortly after this episode, it is said that Howell betook himself to Coke Chapel steps, Kingston's main political battleground, which was where he began to sell the pictures of the Ethiopian Emperor (See Figure 2). An observer at the time, P.A. Thompson, recalls that "his talk was somewhat of an attempt to rival Garvey". This might well help to explain why, in his opening speech at one of the sessions of the UNIA convention, as described by the *Jamaica Times* on 25 August 1934, it was said that "Mr. Garvey also referred to the Ras Tafari cult, speaking of them with contempt".

There has never been any satisfactory account of how Howell actually obtained the photograph of the Ethiopian Emperor. However, Henry Dunkley, who commenced his own missionary labours on behalf of the doctrine of Rastafari early in 1934, alleged, in conversation with the author, that it was from the sect known as 'the Israelites' that Howell obtained a copy of what he describes

as the 'Prince of Peace' photograph. Dunkley declared: "Howell went round to their headquarters at Paradise Street after he came back from New York and catch hold of one of the photograph and developed on it and brought it forward to the public, and let the public know that is the Eternal Messiah come back." Dunkley is thus quite definite in his view that Howell "copied all of what they [the Israelites] were doing and launched out himself and formed a body of people, Back-to-Africa movement".

'The Israelites' was the name adopted by the religious sect founded by David and Annie M. Harvey after their return to Jamaica from Ethiopia in 1930-31. Both individuals had originally met in Port Limon, Costa Rica, where they were married. They left Costa Rica sometime after 1920 and travelled to Panama, Cuba, and the United States. They returned to Jamaica in 1924 but stayed for only about two months. Annie Harvey claimed that "she was called by a vision to go to Abyssinia to do missionary work [and] her husband and she therefore, left for Abyssinia where they remained for five and a half years before they returned to Jamaica where she continued her missionary work." (See Figure 3). It is Dunkley's belief that "if they [the Harveys] did not believe in Ras Tafari, I do not think they would bring that photograph of him and teach the people them of Africa".

Howell's Doctrine

It was in Kingston that Howell began to hold his first public meetings on the subject of 'Ras Tafari, King of Abyssinia' in January 1933, but without much success. The following month he transferred his energies away from the capital, and by April 1933 he had begun to concentrate his proselytizing efforts in the eastern parish of St. Thomas. At Trinityville, which is in the eastern part of the parish, Howell was said to have delivered on 18 April 'words of a seditious nature'

before a meeting of some 200 people. His statements were taken down by the police and submitted to the clerk of the courts with a view to issuing seditious proceedings against him. However, when they were consulted, both the crown solicitor and the attorney general advised against pressing charges, since it was felt that Howell was 'a ranter who would revel in the advertisement of a prosecution'. The inspector general of police nonetheless alerted the island's constabulary by circular memo 'to keep a strict eye on him'.

Howell's 'rantings' at Trinityville, as reported in the statements taken by the police, represent the first systematic account of how Howell was presenting the doctrine of Rastafari before the people. One of the police corporals present gave this account:

I heard Leonard Howell, the speaker, said to the hearers: "The Lion of Judah has broken the chain, and we of the black race are now free. George the

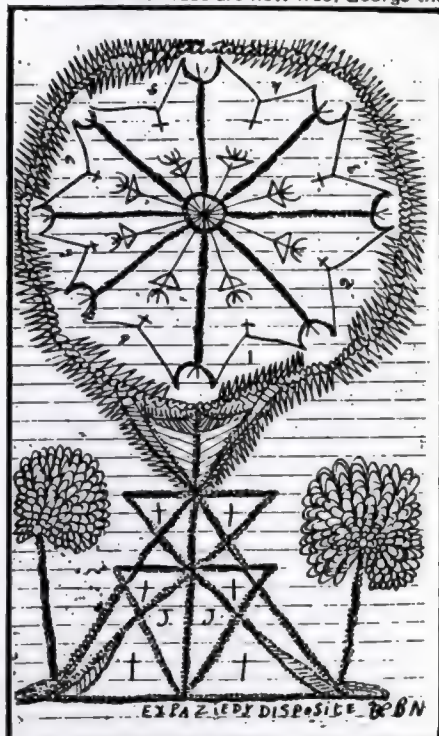


Fig 5: Ideographic diagram by J.N. Hibbert found in the front inside cover of a minute book kept by him of his early meetings.

Fifth is no more our King. George the Fifth has sent his third son down to Africa in 1928 [sic] to bow down to our new king Ras Tafari. Ras Tafari is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The Black people must not look to George the Fifth as their King any more — Ras Tafari is their king". . . . He said "The negro is now free and the white people will have to bow to the Negro Race". At the end of the meeting, he said "You must sing the National Anthem, but before you start, you must remember that you are not singing it for King George the Fifth, but for Ras Tafari our new king".

Howell was reported to have showed his hearers a photograph of 'a white man and a black man', the former being 'George the Fifth's third son', while the latter was 'Ras Tafari, the new King'. A district constable who was also in attendance at the meeting reported that in passing the photographs around Howell declared, "if any body have any grievance, they must write to Ras Tafari the King of Kings and Lord of Lords"; he also reported that Howell said further that "the Black race is now free and must look to Ras Tafari as their King". A dressmaker living in the district of Trinityville also gave a sworn deposition to the police in which she declared: "I also saw him [Howell] with cards selling for £1. each. He said that the cards are to be filled up and sent to Ras Tafari our new King. He further said 'If you do not believe what I am saying, you must write to the Governor or the Inspector of Police.' " Another dressmaker, who was visiting Trinityville from Kingston, deposed to the police that Howell stated that Ras Tafari marked 'a fulfilment of prophecy', and that he was 'the Lion of Judah which shall break every chain for the Negroes are now under a greater oppression than during the years of slavery'.

The theme of inversion, a characteristic idiom of millenarianism, was plainly set forth in the context of Howell's emphasis on the presence and behaviour of the Duke of Gloucester, the special representative of his father, King George

V, at the coronation in Addis Ababa in October 1930 of Emperor Haile Sellassie. In the first chapter of *The Promised Key*, entitled 'The Mystery Country', Howell highlighted the significance of their encounter:

The Duke fell down bending knees before His Majesty Ras Tafari the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and spoke in a loud tone of voice and said, "Master, Master my father has sent me to represent him sir. He is unable to come and he said that he will serve you to the end Master".

Howell invested the special coronation gift that the Duke of Gloucester presented to the Ethiopian Emperor right before his kneeling with great significance, with attention paid to the fact that it was "a Sceptre of solid gold twenty seven inches long which had been taken from the hands of Ethiopia some thousand years ago". This 'magnificent piece of workmanship', which had inscribed on one side 'Ethiopia shall make her hands reach unto God' and on the other side 'King of Kings of Ethiopia', when followed by the obeisance of the English royal envoy, was taken by Howell to be the fulfilment of prophecy. In particular, Howell propounded that these events were the fulfilment of Psalms 72:9-11, viz.:

They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, and his enemies shall lick the dust.
The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.
Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him.

and Genesis 49: 10, viz.:

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and until him shall the gathering of the people be.

Further, Howell declared that the homage 'done to him (King Alpha sitting on his Throne) by the Bishops and Priests' was also the fulfilment of the twenty-first Psalm, 'God's blessing of

the King'.

The principle of millenarian inversion was underscored by the actual conversion process, as described to the author by one of the original members of Howell's sect in St. Thomas, Jepheth Wilsson. He recalled the experience in the following terms:

When he [Howell] came, he told us that Christ was back on the earth. But I couldn't understand it, but after him put it to me several times and I read the Scriptures, I saw that he was coming off the Bible. He told us that Christ was coming back with a new name, Ras Tafari. Gradually I watch his movement and I take it home. I go back, and when he started to teach with the Bible and this same Black Supremacy book, I take it home. I had visions in my sleep at night and I said, oh! you come back with a scornful name that scorn the nation, and the name of Ras Tafari is it. The name going to scorn the nation and don't ask if the name isn't doing that.

This notion of 'scorn' as providential punishment of the unjust, which was reminiscent of the language of the Psalms (44:13; 79:4), perfectly illustrates the classic cosmic inversion process of millenarian sectarianism. The

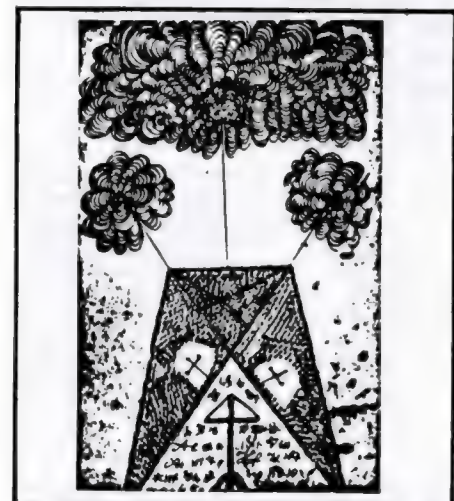


Fig. 6: The ideographic diagram found in the back inside cover of J.N. Hibbert's book of minutes, in which the writing in the lower triangle conforms closely to the cabalistic talismans found in L.W. de Laurence's *The Sixth and Seventh Book of Moses*.



Rastafari doctrine of spiritual inversion, however, also represented a powerful critique of the colonial regime's legitimacy, since the 'scorn' that had customarily been the lot of the oppressed was now displaced on to the oppressor 'nation'. This was more than the fulfilment of prophecy: it also posed the question of the withdrawal of political loyalty from the colonial state and posited in the people a counter political legitimacy through which they were able to challenge the ideological hegemony of the regime.

The Political Threat

It was little wonder that by 1936, two years before the Jamaica labour rebellion of 1938, a retired resident magistrate, C.A. Bicknell, could report to the governor, in a letter warning about the growth of Rastafari propaganda in Kingston, that "the 'Ras Tafari' set were threatening that soon [they] would have their own black war in Jamaica". In a second letter, written 7 April 1936, to the permanent under-secretary of state in the Colonial Office, Bicknell advised that 'Ras-ta-Faris' claimed that 'they are not subjects to Great Britain'; instead, he said, they claimed that 'Ras-ta-Fari is their king and Messiah!'. And after calling attention to a recent public demonstration by members of the sect armed 'with drum and fife and emblems', he disclosed:

In the public streets they preach sedition and assert — "that ere long Jamaica will have its own war and every negro must come to their colours and fight for their rights! A black Governor! A black Colonial Secretary! A black Judge! A black Inspector General etc.! If Britain has taken Africa from them then they must have Jamaica. And the white men must be under them etc."

What Bicknell's statement exposed was the gradual penetration of popular unrest in Jamaica in the two years immediately preceding 1938 by the force of the Rastafari millenarian ideology of racial dominion. Another member of the colonial ruling class, Major B.F.

Cawes, the proprietor of 'Garbrand Hall' estate in Trinityville, St. Thomas, and an old English ex-army officer, would arrive at the same conclusion. After coming upon a copy of Howell's *The Promised Key* in May 1938, the same month that the labour rebellion commenced in Jamaica, he gave it as his view (in his column 'Pepper Pot' in the *Jamaica Times* written under the pseudonym 'Ginger') that "having read it [the book] twice very carefully, I can well understand the race prejudice and bitter hatred which is now so clearly manifested in certain of the lower strata of our society here".

In essence, what these reports point to is the very real likelihood that Rastafarian millenarian ideology functioned as an active catalyst in the developing popular consciousness that led to the labour uprisings of 1938 by virtue of its radical vision of black dominion. For these reasons, therefore, it is not possible to accept Ken Post's judgement that "the [Rastafari] cult as an organization played no very obvious part in the labour rebellion" [of 1938].

The political threat posed by Rastafari agitation was fully recognized by the colonial regime as early as 1933-34. This was confirmed by its attempt to repress the movement's leadership by arresting Leonard Howell and his lieutenant, Robert Hinds. As a result of speeches made by both men respectively on 10 and 21 December 1933, at Seaford district and Chapel Hill in Port Morant, Howell and Hinds were arrested on 1 January 1934, and charged with two counts of sedition each. Both men were tried and found guilty, Howell receiving the heavier term of two years imprisonment and Hinds the lighter sentence of one year.

In his testimony before the court, however, Howell claimed that he had informed his followers '1934 was the starting of a better turn of success' for the movement. This expectation has some bearing on the editorial that appeared in the *Daily Gleaner* on 20

August 1934, reporting on the fact that Rastafarians in St. Thomas were planning 'a march' across the waters to Abyssinia. The editorial further stated that "followers of the Ras-Tafari cult were told by persons who prey upon their gullibility that their deliverance would begin on August 1, on which day they were due to commence a march to Abyssinia — to trample upon the stomachs of white men between the starting point and Kingston, where they would enter the sea, cleave the waters with their beards which they were made to grow, and walk to their future home". Here again we witness the recurrence of the process of millenarian inversion that remained a major characteristic of Rastafari eschatology.

The Peasant Base

Who were these 'creatures' that the newspaper reported 'believe those who gull them'? In fact, the truth of the social composition of the movement and the nature of its social aims were accurately spelled out in the editorial's discussion of the 'march to Abyssinia', about which it had this to say:

Those silly persons of the small producer and labouring class in eastern St. Thomas who have allowed themselves to be saturated with a dangerous cult that has been labelled 'Ras-Tafari', whereas there is not the slightest connection between the local doctrine and the religion of Abyssinia, have become passive resisters. They have been informed by some one, a trickster no doubt, that instructions sent to them by Emperor Ras-Tafari from the Abyssinian capital prescribe that those who own holdings in that parish must not pay taxes to the Government, neither must others who rent lands from the Government and property owners pay rent for plots on which they squat and cultivate. Their belief is that the land belongs to the black people: no longer are they accountable to Government or property owner.

The *Daily Gleaner* was emphatic in its view that 'this looks like playing with fire', and it called specifically "for high officers of the Government to draw their own deduction on this phase of

the question". The issues of land, rent, and taxation were in actuality the expression of the peasant base that provided the dynamic of struggle which gave rise to the millenarian visions of the Rastafari movement. The editorial writer in the *Daily Gleaner* did not entertain any illusions about either the social make-up of the movement or its dangerous portent for the maintenance of the colonial racial economy. "It demands early attention and action in at least one direction", the writer declared, "to destroy a dangerous cult which has taken root in several districts in St. Thomas". It is not at all surprising, therefore, to find that Howell should have tried to maintain the support of his followers in St. Thomas with the promise, in January 1940, that "100 acres of land are available for the habitation of all black people in Jamaica also £4000 for construction of their houses and planting vineyards".

From 1935 onward, however, the movement was subject to increasingly intense police repression in St. Thomas and the eastern countryside. Thus, for example, it was reported in the *Daily Gleaner* on 19 August 1935, that "due to the activity of the St. Thomas police, Ras-Tafarians have been brought to a standstill in that parish". The report disclosed that "they are not permitted to hold meetings and speak in support of the doctrine they espouse", and it concluded that "for the present the movement which was started in St. Thomas a couple of years ago has ceased to exist". As the movement declined in St. Thomas, however, evidence pointed to the fact that it was finding a favourable response in the adjoining parish of Portland. But here once again the local police moved swiftly to crush it. It was reported from Port Antonio, in a report entitled 'Ras Tafari Cults Excite Portlanders', in the *Daily Gleaner* of 30 July 1935, that the parish had been invaded by Rastafari doctrines, and, moreover, that "if something is not done to lessen the tension, and if possible break down the rising

courage of the misinformed and less intelligent, there is bound to be extreme unpleasantness for many of the people of this town".

The Prophetic Role

The importance of Howell's special relationship to the early Rastafari movement is one that does deserve specific comment, since the dual nature of his leadership qualitatively differed from other contemporary figures. On the secular level, Howell officially bore the designation 'President General' of the body known as 'The King of Kings' Mission (See Fig. 4) and in this capacity he presented himself as the 'ambassador' in Jamaica of Ras Tafari. Howell's status as a messianic prophet was described to the author rather well by Jepheth Wilson, who recalled:

Howell came here in Jamaica and the government didn't know how he came in Jamaica, and they can't know, but he come to gather his people and he come as Leonard Percival Howell with his doctrine and taught us. He showed us the light. Thousands came up to him.

And, as befitting a prophet, Howell was attributed with the possession of secret power. One portent of this power was recalled by Jepheth Wilson:

When they were trying him [Howell] at Morant Bay, he called all the police them round, and a big red cock, nobody know where the cock come from, come up on the step and started crowing. The police run him away, but three times the cock crowed, and he told the judge that if he found him guilty to give him the maximum of the law because when the day come when I shall sit around my radiant throne and judge you, I am going to judge you, so give me the full maximum.

An additional symptom of this status as a prophet was the ritual devotion that Howell was accorded in various hymns his followers sang. They were heard to sing, for instance, the following 'chorus' on the night that Howell made the speech for which he was ultimately

charged with sedition:

Leonard Howell seeks me and he finds me,
Fills my heart my glee;
That's why I am happy all the day,
For I know what Leonard Howell is
doing for my soul,
That's why I am happy all the day.

In like manner, when the police carried out a surprise raid in March 1938 against what remained of the movement's headquarters near Golden Grove, St. Thomas, it was reported that "the members were singing their song, 'Howell's Heart Is So Full'".

In his role as prophet, Howell assumed a ritual personality separate from his secular identity. This second ritual identity was expressed through the use of the separate name, 'G.G. Maragh', which was the name Howell employed in his putative role as author of *The Promised Key*. In the closing section of the book, he enjoined his readers: 'As I G.G. Maragh speak unto you . . . 'According to Jepheth Wilson, an early follower, 'everybody know him and call him Gangunguru Maragh'. He remembers clearly that "when we say Mr. Howell, he say no, Gangunguru Maragh, and everybody would say, 'Yes, Gong' ", which was the abbreviated form that was most popularly used. Hence it is very probable that the initials 'G.G.' may simply have been abbreviations which Howell used to give more formal appearance to his cult name. It appears that the name itself was actually a combination of three Hindi words, 'gyan' (meaning wisdom), 'gun' (meaning virtue or talent), and 'guru' (meaning teacher). The English translation of the three conjoined words is 'teacher of famed wisdom', corresponding to the names that Hindu leaders customarily adopt to suggest wisdom or enlightenment. Howell's use of the surname 'Maragh', which in Hindi means 'great king' or 'king of kings', was also consistent with the significance of the first set of names; in fact, Brahmin holy men and priests are addressed frequently by the name 'Maharaj'. In sum, the cult



name 'Gangunguru Maragh' suggests a quest by Howell after mystical status, which probably confirmed the mental picture that he had of himself as well as the attitude that his followers held of him as a religious prophet.

But in due course, however, Howell expanded his ritual identity beyond that of prophet. According to the recollection of Henry Dunkley, it was "after Howell went to Pinnacle (in 1940) that he let the people know that he is the returned messiah". Paul Earlington also described to the author that Howell made his followers believe that 'when you go to him, [it] is God you are talking to'. This was confirmed by 'Ginger', in his 'Pepper Pot' column in the *Jamaica Times*, on 11 January 1941, when he commented that "the height of delusion has been reached when men sell their possessions, leave home and friends and travel miles to join about 700 others under this 'leader', whom they worship as a god". 'Ginger' also told of "a man who abandoned his wife and home to go to this settlement 'Pinnacle' saying that he had only heard of his god up to now but was going to see him!" Furthermore, when Jepheth Wilson was asked by the writer to explain the meaning of 'Gangunguru Maragh', he responded: "We hold him to be the Christ", and as proof, he pointed to the existence of what he referred to as 'the nail print' present on Howell's feet, an observation which he said confirmed that "God is on the face of the earth right here in Jamaica now". He qualifies this, however, by saying that "Howell don't tell us that he is the Christ, but is our knowledge reason up, and to what we have seen what miracle he has performed".

The word 'Gangunguru' also showed up in a number of places in the text of the Rastafari 'cult prayer' that was published by the *Daily Gleaner* on 18 January 1937. Something close to it appears in the second line of the prayer ('gan-zasngoo roo'), while the exact phrase was repeated in the twentieth line ('ganyoongaororoo'), and again in lines

33 and 34 ('gangoon goo roo'). In fact, the text of the prayer contains a curious blend of several words that appear to be derivations from original Hindi, Urdu, and Bengali words.

However, the prayer's opening phrase, 'To Allah alpha', appears paradoxical in light of the cultic allegiance to Hindu religion denoted by Howell's ritual names. The source of this ambivalence might well have been the sensationalized propaganda disseminated by Frederico Philos in his article on "The Black Peril". It had recently been republished in the *Jamaica Times* from a Canadian journal, *Magazine Digest* which contained a condensation of the original articles that had appeared originally in Vienna, in *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* on 17 and 24 August 1935. In the article, Philos invoked the spectre of blacks "welded into an ominous secret league", which he claimed was "united under the leadership of Islam focussed in the semi-independent negro states of Abyssinia, Egypt and Liberia". In this connection, it is significant that upon his release from the mental asylum in late 1938, Howell was reported to have returned using the name 'Menena [sic] Pasha', at which time his headquarters at Heywood Street in Kingston became renamed 'The Temple'.

When he was confronted by the *Daily Gleaner's* reporter with the original text of the 'cult prayer', Howell was said to have grown apprehensive and was said to have "emphatically refused to translate" the document. The reporter could only describe it as written in "the 'unknown' tongue" of the Rastafari cult. The newspaper account went further: "Our Reporter, who has listened to this mysterious prayer on various occasions was unable to give its interpretation, but was able to say that it forms a pivotal part of all Ras Tafari ceremonies, and after each incantation, the cultists are thrown into a fanatical frenzy not far removed from the throes of pocomania." The present writer was also informed by Jepheth Wilson that the

sect's membership were obliged to recite the prayer at night before sleeping. "We are praying to Howell", Wilson states, "who teach it but we don't understand it". In fact, Wilson refers to it as "the African prayer". When, according to him, Howell "start to tear the language, we couldn't catch it, as he talk it so deep".

On the face of it, the prayer seems analogous to the exercise of the 'gifts of the Spirit' in the Pentecostal sense. Indeed, 'speaking in tongues' had assumed such wide proportion in Jamaica by the middle of the 1930s that the phenomenon itself was actually referred to by one commentator as "the 'tongue movement' in Jamaica". Another author, in reporting on the activities of 'the Pocomaniacs', described a similar activity in their ritual observances whereby "prayer is offered up in the Unknown Tongue (by the Holy Mother) and is repeated in jargonic style by her followers". What was different about the Rastafari cult prayer, however, was the fact that it was actually committed to written form. "The original script is written in pencil", reported the newspaper account at the time of the prayer's publication, "each word being painstakingly underlined". Another difference was the fact that Howell employed the prayer's language outside of ceremonial ritual. Thus, for example, in April 1937, when Howell and 14 of his followers were tried following a violent tussle with opponents at their Princess Street headquarters in Kingston, it was reported that "Leonard Howell wept in court and cried out in an unknown tongue for the King of Kings to avenge his cause".

There is no dispute that Howell was 'the man who introduced the chant [the prayer] to the Rastafari mission movement', according to William Powell. "During the time of Mr. Howell", he adds, "when he was in the meetings we always hear that chant". It would appear, however, that many of the words of the prayer were supplied by Howell's East Indian recruit in St.

Thomas, remembered today simply as 'Laloo', and described as 'one of Howell direct bodyguard'. The truth is that the prayer might not have been the only thing that 'Laloo' was responsible for introducing into the ritual of the Rastafari movement via Howell. William Powell recalled for the author this individual's important other contribution to the belief system of Rastafari:

The first understanding that we had of the "Black Supremacy" was from the coolie man [Laloo] from St. Thomas, who was very close to Mr. Howell in St. Thomas; then he came over to Kingston and then we started the work at Princess Street. It was then we got introduced to the doctrine and then we saw the "Black Supremacy".

This might well account for the large number of Hindi, Urdu, and Bengali words found in the text of the prayer. In the circumstances, it would appear that what we are confronted with in Howell's 'chant' is not so much an instance of glossolalia, meaning lexically non-communicative utterances, but something close to xenoglossia, since the prayer actually comprises a number of utterances in a foreign language.

The Revivalist Context

While at first glance it might appear strange that the prophet of Rastafari religion in Jamaica should have chosen to adopt an East Indian ritual identity, the ambiguity disappears when it is cast within the context of the spirit-mystic world of Jamaican revivalism. In his study of the revival cults in Jamaica, Edward Seaga notes that in the rituals of Pukkumina (pocomania) the use of drumming occurs only "where East Indian spirits are involved". He places them in the category called 'ground' spirits, the other two constellations being known as 'heavenly' spirits and 'earthbound' spirits. But Seaga also informs us that among revivalists the source of their magical beliefs (termed *Science*) is to be found in "the numerous books published by the de Laurence Company of Chicago, U.S.A."

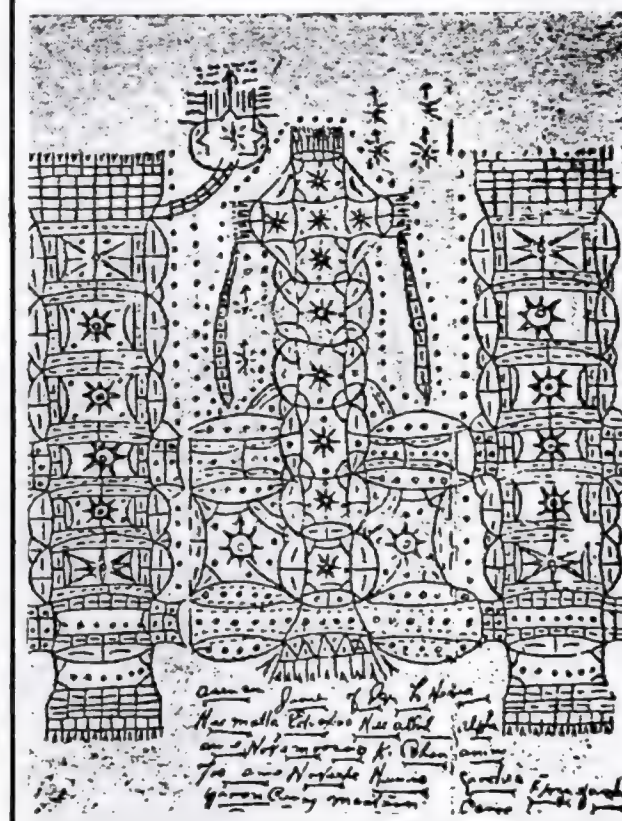
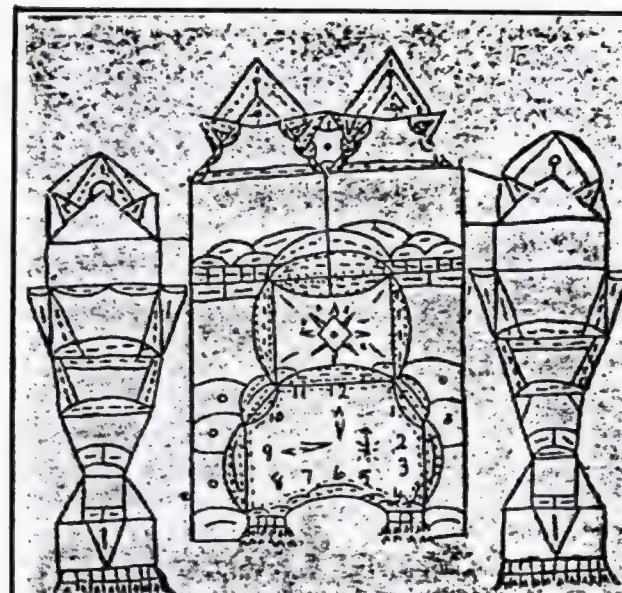


Fig. 7: "A Cultist's interpretation of a dream of what houses in future Abyssinia will look like" (*Daily Gleaner*, 18 January 1937, p. 28). Note the handwritten material at the foot of the lower diagram on which the jargon of the Rastafari cult prayer also appears. Cf. Vittorio Lanternari, "Dreams as Charismatic Significants: Their Bearing on the Rise of New Religious Movements," pp. 221-35, in Thomas R. Williams, ed., *Psychological Anthropology* (The Hague: Mouton, 1975).



and he tells us that the most popular of such works is the *Great Book of Magical Arts, Hindu Magic and Indian Occultism*. In the polytheistic universe of Jamaican folk religion, therefore, East Indian spirits mix with Hindu occultism to produce a genuinely mystical appeal, a finding that is confirmed by Leonard Barrett in his study of "witchcraft and psychic phenomena in Jamaica". In a recorded interview with one whom he describes as 'a genuine obeahman', Barrett was told about his communication with 'the Great Indian mystic Tagore', who was also described by the informant as being 'good, good as gold'. On the basis of such an appeal, therefore, it comes as no surprise that Howell should choose to invest his spiritual personality within the cosmology of Hindu mysticism.

To some extent, it was belief in the power of magic that sustained the faith of the Rastafari followers of Howell against the reality of Ethiopia's defeat in 1936. This was well illustrated in the details that Randolph Williams gave in a published report in January 1939 on the return of Howell. He discovered that both Howell and his followers rejected the notion that "Abyssinia is no longer an independent state, but a part of the Italian Empire, [and] Rastafari is for all practical purposes no longer Emperor of Ethiopia but an ex-monarch in exile". Instead, Williams found that exactly the opposite view obtained:

Ras Tafari of Jamaica, however, say no to these facts. They say that in truth the King of Kings has a great Navy hidden in the interior of Abyssinia on a lake, a Navy that anytime it sails out will make the navies of England, Italy, Germany, America and Japan look like poor little undersized boats; that there are armanent factories in the uplands of Abyssinia in huge caves turning out tons of ammunitions daily; that there are airplanes and submarines galore at the disposal of the Rases of Ethiopia. They also declare that such forces, when the time is ripe, will be augmented by sinister influences; that the Ethiopians slain in battle will rise up and become an invisible army that

will march upon the foe when commanded by Ras Tafari. They say that the King of Kings has a stronger army, consisting of fierce man-eating beasts — tigers, leopards, lions, waiting to bound out of hiding at dead of night, raid Italian camps and feed on the invaders as soon as the word comes from the Emperor; snakes, caterpillars, scorpions and all sorts of poisonous reptiles and insects are said to have been conscripted and regimented for war service so that they may be ready when Ethiopia calls.

It thus remains important to recognize the depth to which popular belief in the power of the occult played a formative role in the early stages of Rastafari consciousness. But this ought not to be surprising, since in its early stage it possessed close and organic links with the belief and ritual systems of Jamaican folk religion.

In fact, even the nomenclature of revivalism was present in the adoption by Howell of the name 'King of Kings Mission'. The term 'mission' was always used interchangeably with 'bands' as the designation for revivalist-pocomania-Pentecostal sects in Jamaica. Nor was the potential for articulation between Rastafari eschatology and pocomania-revivalism lost on observers at the time. For example, in a letter published in the Daily Gleaner, on 8 October 1934, E.B. Grant disclaimed against the "social evils" that he argued were associated with "those forms of religion in Jamaica known as Pocomania, Myalism and the religion of the 'Ras Tafarians' — the last named being a newcomer to the field". In a similar vein, a British official in the Colonial Office in London wrote a minute in the file dealing with Howell's Ethiopian Salvation Society to the effect that "the society has probably developed doctrines combining sedition with pocomania". This was the same view expressed by E.B. Grant in his letter, which referred to "the new-fangled religion of the 'Ras Tafarians' ", as being "a religion reeking with blasphemy and sedition".

The same process of articulation between Rastafari and other forms of folk religious expression was observable in the case of Robert Hinds, Howell's lieutenant in St. Thomas, who, prior to his espousal of Rastafari doctrine, had been a disciple of Alexander Bedward, the legendary revivalist-healer-prophet of August Town between 1895 and 1921. Hinds was present during Bedward's final march from August Town in the spring of 1921, when the police halted the marchers on the Hope Road and arrested them thus preventing Bedward from reaching the harbour where he planned a final 'manifestation'. P.A. Thompson, who attended what he says was Howell's first meeting at 'Redemption Ground' in Kingston, recalls that Howell "made contact with many of the old time Bedwardites, because many of them were on his platform that evening". He also observes that "some of his first time followers were just old time Bedwardites". Finally, the possibility of religious convergence existed in the districts of eastern St. Thomas where Rastafari religion found ready converts, since these were the same areas where the Kumina cult existed among "the descendants of nineteenth-century Central African immigrants", and who also spoke and sang in an 'African' language during the course of their religious rituals. It was thus entirely likely that some degree of overlap existed between the adherents of the various Kumina bands in these areas and the early converts of Rastafari millenarianism; at the very least, there would have been mutual awareness of co-existence.

In conclusion, what I believe that data presented here in this paper point very clearly to is the need to approach the study of the phenomenon of Rastafari awakening as an integral aspect of the larger matrix of black religious nationalism, folk religious revivalism, and Jamaican peasant resistance to the plantation economy and state. The evidence should also indicate that there is an urgent need to reintegrate the study

of Rastafarianism into the dynamic flow of popular social movements in a manner that is sensitive to both the complex aspects of continuity and discontinuity in the overall historical process. This will only be possible, however, on the condition that we remain conscious of the underlying formation of popular consciousness under conditions of oppression, rather than with the traditional preoccupation with the process of 'acculturation', which is, in reality, an external concern and one that seriously inhibits understanding. When its origins are thus seen from *within* their evolutionary process, both the content and context of the early Rastafari phenomenon take on a rather different perspective from the reductionist interpretation, since, first and last, they produce their own criteria of investigation.

As for this generation of the 20th Century, you have no knowledge how worlds are built.

And upon what trigger Kingdoms are set.

Fitz Balintine Pettersburgh,
Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy, p.1.

APPENDIX I

"The Cult Prayer"

To Allah alpha to matta edoo koo
to ganzasngoo roo
Manage anne jabo novy moosoo
hel at ataga gerier
Anne nunia amil nunia gandec annxe
etoza gandec annxe nokeye
Anne etobeph anne enophele anne-
yaran anne mantour
Ceraz anne veke sum you go amme
pata pata amme pata pata
Loohoo neeyou an ciez aquk chow
are bhoo hec hew
Mee jng anne pata pate muchra
hoo roo wee hezoo jungle helot pata

Pata nee jng nee coo doo be hoo
moowo nee coodoabo
Hezoo mee macheo k juge helah
nee pata pata a cobanabium
Anne pata pata helat anoomba mee
aquychow ganyoongaororoo

Dilitil novgm aosoo novyke yasancheoog
mantaan coervz
Nunis estoge anne dro u b madam
annequdu gatoopee backa
Liked go cosomina ki acencen cuso
lozoo k fnoo k coloramez

2.

Loohoo gabe neeallah jay coso last
lanto k cooclooba e wah
Yavan clewoog loo oke k janier so
shelper fuoon ledgnee k lookoo
Yas an ccerez can cant life without
k herbo lookoo gala for medicine
Ya alla for wee pata pata mee gangoon
goo roo wice aquzchow
Etza k coochoo k kosmina anne
nokas moosoo noveve akaka
E wal aquzchow yas an cieval goloo
k jenie but nee gaz
Nee matta edookoo k muchew anne
heke he lah k lo
And co k segui choro hench yar
an cook lahenie geanene
Halin cebon minz coorooding yan
go annedocoos
Am sawsback anne watie anne
jurah anne apaz
To Allah.

(From the "Cult Leader's Story", *Daily Gleaner*, Monday 18 January 1937, p. 28.)

APPENDIX II

"A Strange Correspondence"

N.B.: This was the title given by Marcus Garvey to the publication in the *Black Man* Vol. 2, No. 7, August 1937, p.20 of an exchange of letters with Evangelist Edith Johnson in Costa Rica. In rejecting her commission, Garvey informed her "I am not able to see visions other than those based upon the practical side of life". Her letter to Garvey shows evidence of the dispersal beyond Jamaica of the millenarian resort to prophecy to establish the biblical basis of the enthroning of Emperor Haile Sellassie of Ethiopia. Her use of the symbology of the 'Bride' can be traced to Revelation 21:2 and 22:7, in which the bride features as both the New Jerusalem and the daughter of Zion, implying that God the Redeemer finally resides in concrete form among men. The use of the title 'Queen Esther' also denotes the biblical Queen Esther pleading for her people [Esther 7:3,4].

NOTE

¹ More recently the phrase 'black supremacy' supplies the title for Prince Emmanuel's doctrinal statement regarding his belief in the "Black Christ Salvation".

Box 36,
Port Limon,
Costa Rica, C.A.
Dear Mr. Garvey,

You are appointed by the King of Kings to accomplish the work which you have begun, under the rules of the King of Heaven, and whatever, you are commanded to do, please do it, without fail. This is God's time, and we must obey his word, called and chosen the Bride of Christ, of which you will know later. Please publish this message enclosed in whatever language you can, and do not forget to send a copy to the newspapers at Jerusalem. If you fail, another will take your place.

I shall be glad to have an answer from you.

Yours truly,
Sgd. Evangelist Edith Johnson.
(Title from Christ Queen Esther).

(15 July, 1937)

A ROYAL MESSAGE FROM THE BRIDE OF CHRIST TO ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH.

In the name of the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, I am commanded to notify all the people of earth that the Lord Jesus Christ has now ascended to the throne of glory, and to him is given dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom that all people, nations and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his Kingdom shall not be destroyed. (Prophecy by Dan. 7.14.). All representatives of the gospel of Christ are now called to the Battle of Armageddon to show if your works are in accordance with the word of God. The reign of Christ has begun, and every nation must be under their vine and fig tree. There are two nations that are now scattered over the earth, and they must return back to their own land, Africa for the Africans, Palestine for the Jews. This is the word of God. Let brotherly love continue. I am the Bride of Christ, and I am now sitting with him on his throne. (Rev. 3.21, Rev. 26-27), and I have the Everlasting Gospel to preach to you nations. Now please consider your ways, and submit yourselves to the mighty God of Israel. This message will be sent to every nation under heaven. In the name of His Majesty the Lord Jesus Christ, by the hand of his Bride, Queen of the realm. A daughter of Israel and Ethiopia. (Prophecy). And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion the Kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem. (Micah Chapter 4, Verse 8):

The Everlasting Gospel, from the Queen Esther (Title).

Osmond Watson's Masquerades

By Gloria Escoffery



Masquerade 1978. Oil on Canvas. 55½" x 40". Collection: National Gallery.

Few persons in Jamaica, I think, look with a really searching eye at the works that artists are at so much pains to produce, or realise that in the case of the really serious artist there is a single thread of personality development or search for meaning behind what sometimes seems like a variety of adventures without any coherence. I deem it a real privilege to have experienced a segment of Osmond Watson's oeuvre in a single exhibition (the masquerade series shown at the National Gallery) so that now when I see his *Secret of the Arawaks* for instance (National Festival 1981), it takes on greater meaning for me in terms of the earlier series. May these tentative and inadequate notes tempt the indolent viewer to look with deep concentration and find his own key to the works — not only of Watson but of whichever artists most strike a chord of interest and sympathy in his own peregrination round the galleries.

It may be a painless way of killing time to drift through an exhibition with one's eye half on one's watch — provided the artist is one of these dilettantes who cons the public with his inflated effusions denoting anguish or ecstasy; with someone of the calibre of Osmond Watson the progress from

one work to another, and back again many times, takes real stamina, but proves to be bracing rather than enervating. We come away reassured that, even in this scientific age, technology has given us no benefits that can substitute for, or outrank, the humanistic achievements of art.

Osmond Watson's statement in the Masquerade series is enigmatic, challenging, anything but pusillanimous. Any serious viewer will be struck by the coherence of vision, in spite of the byplay of excursions into cubism, vorticism, constructivism, etc. Having once taken up the theme and discovered its potentiality for him, he appears to wrestle with it like Jacob wrestling with his angel, never giving it up till he arrives at some sort of resolution — which may yet be temporary, who knows! The gulf between the almost naturalistic *Bachanal* of 1968 with its complicated response to social ritual and the extremely simple statements evident in the small, personal canvases of 1980, is indeed a great one. The question I set out to answer for my own satisfaction was why, after so many exploratory excursions in which technique and meaning are surely closely fused, by 1980 he himself brought the series to a halt in the particular way he did, evidently satis-



Bachanal 1968. Oil on Canvas. 29" x 35". Collection: Myers Fletcher and Gordon, Manton and Hart.



The Masqueraders 1976. Oil on Canvas. 50" x 58½". Collection: Dr. and Mrs. Howard Johnson.



Secret of the Arawaks 1977. Oil on Canvas. 40" x 40". Collection: National Gallery.



Masquerade 1968 (Johncanoe). Oil on Canvas. 45½" x 32½". Collection: National Gallery.



Spirit of Christmas 1976. Oil on Canvas. 44½" x 17½". Collection: Mrs. Velma Pollard.

fied that it was in some way psychologically complete.

To me the small *Mask and Artist*, (1980) is indeed the culmination of a definite line of development. Why the self portrait? As an artist, Osmond Watson is beyond the petty egoism of 'self expression' and though he has often undertaken the discipline of self portraits, both large and small, we must ask ourselves by what process this other line of development came to be grafted on to the social theme of Masquerade.

It seems to me that we must seek the answer in terms of a philosophical enquiry into the role of the artist, and particularly the artist ego, in relation to society. Each canvas in some way explores the masks and disguises assumed by the artist, master maker of masks and disguises. With this last painting he says to us, "Here I am, without disguise, plain Osmond Watson; take me or leave me. The inscrutable mask of my personal countenance is of course as much a mask as the horsehead *alter ego*, but at least there is a self behind it that is my own, and known to me better than it will ever be known by you." Thus the private being in a world of masks in which, as T.S. Eliot put it,

*There will be time, there will be time
To prepare a face to meet the faces that we meet.*

Some readers of this article will instantly be put off by my citing the words of that disgracefully (?) 'Eurocentric' American poet, T.S. Eliot, who, as long ago as 1917 startled the English-speaking world with his diagnosis of the decadence of Western civilisation. Yet irony, by 1981 the pervasive mode of consciousness in all but the most primitive communities (witness the work of our own West Indian poet Derek Walcott) is no stranger to us. This multiple vision which operates like a fifth column within divergent cultures and cuts down whatever system of values the ingenious mind of man proposes, still permits the individual to persist in building his little defences against exposure. We go through life little suspecting how much we expose of our most private being each time we move or speak or even exchange glances with our fellow men. Furthermore, we employ our artists to build for us a system of social defences using whatever twigs of 'heritage' we can muster in order to convince ourselves of ethnic homogeneity. Thus the carnival of life in which Walcott's Hector in the poem "Mass Man" has 'entered a lion'.

Osmond Watson, painter, shows us the carnival of Johncanu, in which every man, Jamaican style, has entered a horsehead. This may solace the simple Hectors of our culture, but it seems to me that the very process of going behind the rationale of the ritual inevitably produces in the artist an awareness that no such facile escape from the truth of one's being is possible. Out of irony comes a growth in self-knowledge till there is nothing left but the last defences of the integral self, engaged in dialogue with a society made up of so many not entirely dissimilar, more or less integrated selves.

It would be a mistake to view Osmond Watson's works with the eye of a chauvinist and castigate him when he appears to be working his way thorough the styles which — some critics may say — Europe long ago tried on for size. Nor can we pin him down to images with the facile connotation of Jamaican 'roots culture'. Anything but provincial in the range of his artistic inspiration, Watson is a mainstream creative synthesizer and must be viewed as such; it is by no means irrelevant to take stock of possible sources of reference from the four corners of the known cultural globe. The world, in this age in which moon walking has become common-



Mask and Dancer 1978. Oil on Canvas. 40" x 36". Private Collection.

place, is indeed a small place, and it is time that we Jamaicans stopped being so parochial and equip ourselves to make the best possible use of this ragbag of cultures which we inherit by reason of our membership in the common family of man. In Watson's works I catch glimpses of diverse possible sources of inspiration, probably unconscious, which range from Goya's *Burial of the Sardine*, through Picasso's *Guernica*, to our familiar masked Johncanu (who may himself have remote ancestors in satyr figures of primeval wild men, come down to us by way of 'Jack in the Green', or for that matter, have roots in the masked figures of African religions).

The usual tendency of artists is to start from a basis of acquisitive naturalism, in which everything seen, touched or otherwise experienced provides the matrix for later development. If we start from Watson's 1968 *Bachanal* in which the theme of a saturnalia provides the key, we can, I believe, discover some lurching progress towards the ultimate simplifications of 1980. The stylistic experiments of the intervening years indicate both a process of involvement with technique and a progressive trial and rejection of modes of thought — each of course relevant as a stage of psychic development. How far in spirit the geometric improvisations of the *Masqueraders* of 1976 seem from the two semi-naturalistic *Mask and Dancer* compositions of 1978 and the *Masquerade* of the same year. It seems that the artist arrived at some sort of watershed in which he discarded the old stylistic solutions and ventured out to forge an original iconography which in turn led to a new phase of interest in hieroglyphics. And so on to the utter simplicity of the final small canvases.

Perhaps after all it would be best to start at the end and work back. *Mask and Artist*, which I have described as representing a sort of "I have come through" declaration of self-discovery, is a deceptively simple work. Here, against a flat background, Watson has achieved a satisfying balance, crea-



Spirit of Festival 1980. Oil on Canvas. 11½" x 5½". Private Collection.



Mask and Artist 1980. Oil on Canvas. 23¼" x 14½". Private Collection.

ting an electrifying tension between the two rival personae, one flat, the other ovoid. The horsehead mask, a rectangle only slightly concave along its centre line, animates the upper and middle field of the picture plane. Oddly enough, the tilt of this form does not destabilize but rather confirms the steady verticality of the human head which, with its stringy neck and hint of modestly sloping shoulder line, almost slides off the right hand bottom quarter of the canvas and nevertheless maintains what can only be defined in moral terms as an emotional front line assurance. Although the full face artist stares out as if deliberately ignoring the *alter ego* of his glaring at us from behind, we feel that he knows him to be there, but held in check as his servant and artifact. In a sense they inhabit the same realm of reality/unreality. The artist has a look of bland self-awareness, as if warning us that we ignore those fire fringed eyes and real teeth at our peril. The frivolous tassel, parody of both the horse's fiery mane and the man's well groomed beard, informs us that the horse is a mere piece of theatre, one capable however, of giving us information that is fundamentally significant.

I am on what I feel to be less sure ground when I speculate about the meaning of the large *Masquerade* of 1978. What I suspect here is the record of some ritual purging of the dominant horse image. Huge and central but deprived of flesh and bone vitality, it seems to be flayed, abstracted into an object of derision or sacrifice. Certainly there is far more life in the triumphant tatterdemalion figure of the horsehead dancer on the left, who, real arms uplifted, proclaims the real man beneath the costume. The large Mephistophelian figure on the right, whip in hand and raised pitchfork in the other, definitely belongs within Watson's family of costumed dancers; here he wears red tights to indicate his connection with the underworld, but a horned head dress and elegant tail do not a genuine Satan make.

The strong, earthbound feet of Watson's 'real' figures draw attention to themselves. This is true of the red-garbed woman (female persona of the Devil?) who appears in the small canvas, *Spirit of Festival*. Here the identity of the woman — or succubus — is so strong that her male partner is whirled off his feet though his strong hand realistically clutches her back. Her strong bare feet contrast with his which, in this dervish dance, are reduced to the unreality of so many tin triangles. This reminds me of the treatment of feet in the monumental *Masqueraders* in which Africa seems completely to have usurped the place of Europe in the artist's imagination. Here he gives us a world of primitive possession and power. Instead of gaiety and movement we are faced with three hieratic frontally depicted shaman figures. The two outer figures wear formidable visors of mesh wire — suggested perhaps by the gauze masks traditionally worn by our Johncanu descendants of the Set Girls. Even more terrifying than these (and I am sure that many Jamaicans beside myself have as children run screaming from the scene because of these imperturbable white masks so much more terrifying than horsehead) is the central figure with his/her faceless face; the effect is heightened by the dainty diamond of a handkerchief which succeeds in not quite hiding the skull beneath.

After this the sequence of balletic performances in which the masked figures are obviously entertainers is decidedly a relief. *Many Rivers to Cross* and *Aspirations* are no more than a record of theatrical events, objectively represented. In spite of the beauty of the dancers the effect of distancing reduces the impact and one feels that the elements of naturalism and symbolism are imperfectly fused. The balletic figures appear to be seeking escape into a more comfortable 'artificial' world of choreographed movement in which such horrible psychic realities are secondary to techniques and craft.

My earlier point about the varied sources of Osmond Watson's works may be illustrated by the *Spirit of Christmas* (1976), in which the Magi figure in the top part of the composition surely recalls Yeats's Magi with their 'stiff, painted clothes'. Here we have a similar combination of the grave and gay — a suggestion of the ambivalence with which Yeats, in "The Second Coming", mused on the birth of Christ:

*but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born.*

Europe has no monopoly on the huge metaphysical questions that men throughout the ages have formulated, invoking ritual in order to make some sort of sense of human life. Without going into the echoes of African cosmogony or cosmology, with which I am unfamiliar, I can recognize that Watson's handling of this theme of masquerade will have a deep significance to some viewers in terms of a search for roots in African culture. Those skulls, though, who incidentally people the *Festival Secret of the Arawaks*. How can one take them in without some recognition of a pre-Columbian America — the same tradition which produced the culture of Mexico?

And so the effort to understand Osmond Watson's works has a beginning but no end. I am sure it is true to conclude that the artist himself works from the prompting of Jungian images which relate to no single culture but have their roots in the deepest psychic experiences of the human race.



Laura Facey, And Deep Within That Blue. 1981. Grass stalks, satin wood and suede. 23½" x 31" x 4". Collection: The Artist.

THE ANNUAL NATIONAL EXHIBITION 1982 National Gallery of Jamaica

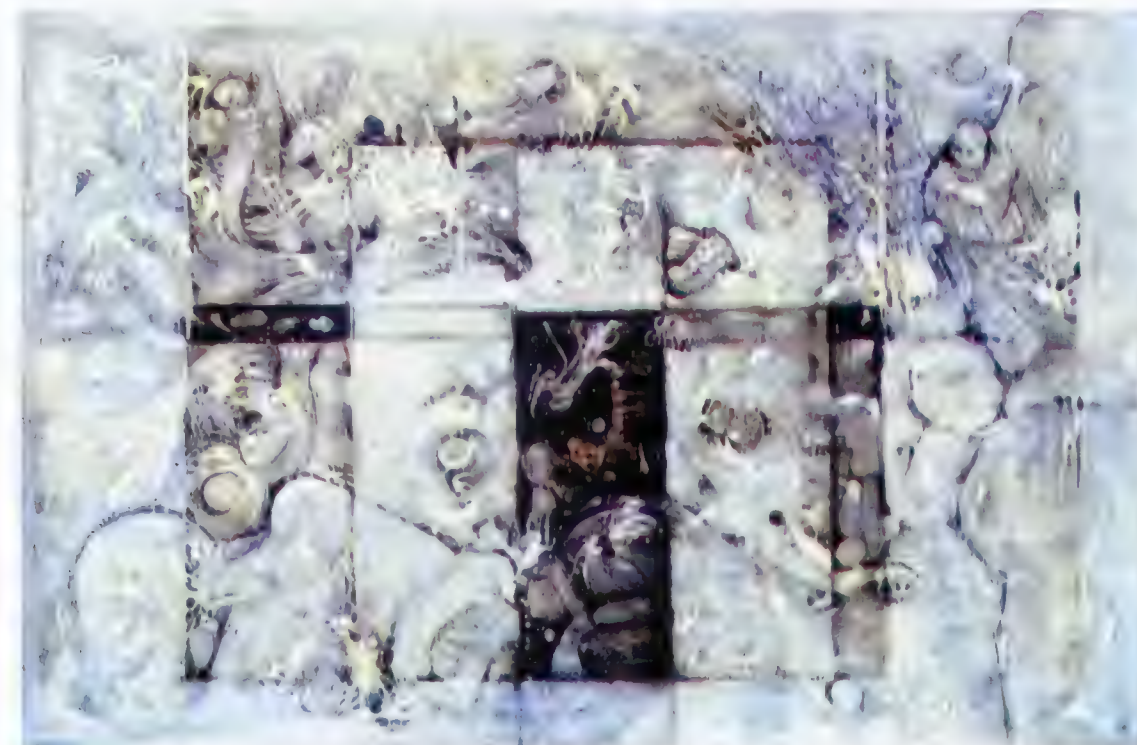
Colour Transparencies Andreas Oberli



Tina Matkovic, Torch Lily (Diptych). 1982. Oil on linen. L.P. Torch Lily Father. 50" x 30". Collection: The Artist. R.P. Torch Lily. 41" x 51". Collection: Mrs. Gloria Palomino.



Milton George, Forever Women. 1982. Oil on paper. 29" x 22½". Collection: Mr. Guy McIntosh.



David Boxer, Nervfeld 2 - The Departure. 1982. Mixed media on canvas. 40" x 60". Collection: Royal Bank Jamaica Ltd.

Dennis Scott

New Poems

Birdwalk

Sing a sang a dunny:
belly full a win,
scrubbin all de mawnin,
ole, an thin.
"Now de day is ova . . ."
tryin nat to cry —
blackbird in de gyaden singin,
hangin out to dry.

Mister in de countin house
countin up de money,
Missis in de dinin room
eatin off de honey.
Gatta in de gyaden
prayin nat to dead,
waitin fe de blackbird
walkin through she head . . .

Frostsong: for Joy

That heat you make is a hammer on my days.
They receive you as seeds do, planted
to explode. Their fuses release
everything, suddenly
a field of birds' wings, open:
the green ash of that fling into air
simplifies the quiet stone.
But some places the sun never hits.
My eye drains there.
That soft water becomes ice.
The stabbed rock wrinkles open.
On dry days its crack sounds like leaves
where a thief passed.
I will never know what he has taken.
On those slabbed faces
nothing roots
no one climbs
no hand stays.
Sometimes I hide there. Mouth wide. Cold. Wanting

A country Theseus

It lumbers from a hill, whistling
across the sour afternoon. She wanders
through the threaded station, holding in her eye
that train, and his travel bag.

She has brought him oranges to take from the country,
wild as the colour of her skirt, washed.
Shy.

It's time.

Wave to him quick, one hand. Before away from
that clew of sunlight caught at the golden fruit
he turns his clear face
to the city.

Ah, the quiet fields. The cows of his sleep.

His eye narrows around the station now
she's waving
smaller
and small
the way back wound in
to the bull's tight wheel. He smiles

: the old poets were liars.
It is the labyrinth that he desires.

Letters to my son: no. 8

I am trying to live with the ease of those men,
foot-firm on the shelved sand.
They knit thick hands in the net. They fish silently.
The sea falls back through its weave
heavy as sleep,
or they couldn't work that weight, that green
muscle, could not bend
the clear-eyed fish from its furl, into air.

So I leave spaces in my life
like the hungry silences of fishermen.
I tie words into rough threads
and drag with them
not what falls through, what leaves salt on the face,
but those quick images
caught at my mind, leaping

among the day's drift
the heart's hurl
the blood's breaking
the web-twist of
this world's wet dazzle

Exercising the horses

When overhead the slate sky burns
white, breaks
like a dreamer's face under
the sun's hammer;
when tree-stems are stone and opal, when
the moon dims, rough and rust,

I wake to feed them.
Make them shoes of bone.
They eat salt from my skin.
I make them reins, braided
from sinew.

When I sleep
they rest, watching like fires
till the sky cracks open.

Then I wake
into their eyes, beginning. Then it's time
to follow them across the fields of sunlight,
hurling behind those high, arched, silent
journeys into dark.

A biography

The first journey was to find her. Freed her —
she had twisted the sunlight round feather and face,
mewled anger at the Tree,
astonished him with teeth.
He bled a long time after.

The second recovered every petal
storm had struck off into city, sky, season.
Found one in the hand of a man dying,
could hardly take it; another pressed thin
by the sea's weight — brought that up with coral
stamped on its silk. One
had never touched earth, perhaps, turning
like a candle in each wind, till he ate it.

Third time, spat. Rooted himself in the wet place
under its growing shadow
closed eye, mouth, shut up his hearing
drew the skin tight on his bones
stopped his breath
and became still.

Hummed over his head
sipping from that flower
the bright bird.
His, finally.

Possessions

*a bird climbs
through the arc of your calm voice
it is my hunger*

*touch
touch
see me*

*its salt cry
sings like wind on a hammered wing
motionless*

catch me

*beats the air thinner than shadow
falls
across the door*

I'm here

down your eye

open

enters the silken marrow of your bone

come

touch me

*turns in the blood over
and over
broods
is here*

feed me

touch

*doesn't sleep
is here*

now

yes

ahh

listen

*the pale hum of your hands
barely touching*

me

Collector's item

*This document is out of place
on the calm shelf of my middle-aging life.
I thought I had withdrawn your face
from circulation.
Yet, the title's catalogued:
sometimes a circuit closes.
That mouse, memory, tooth on a nerve,
hooks to my spine, scans,
and its feet scratch out again
your soiling images, my recollected rage.
Line after line the curator prints out my pain.
Page after page.
There is no use reflecting on your shame.
As a child cries out, shocked,
I shake it from my back,
disconnecting. Till the next time
that I hear your name.*

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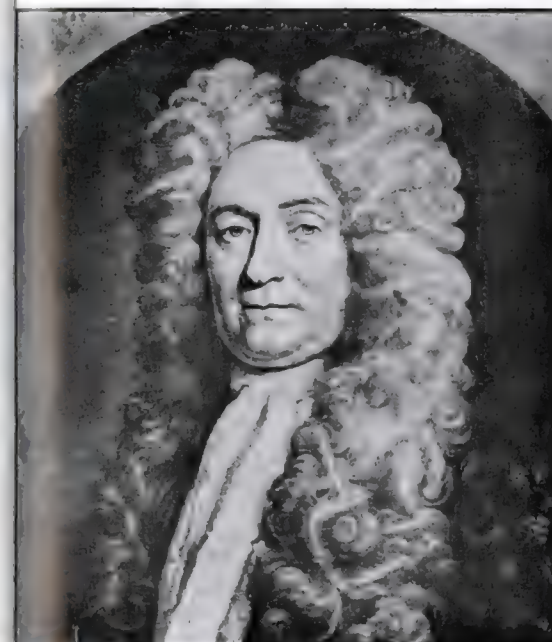
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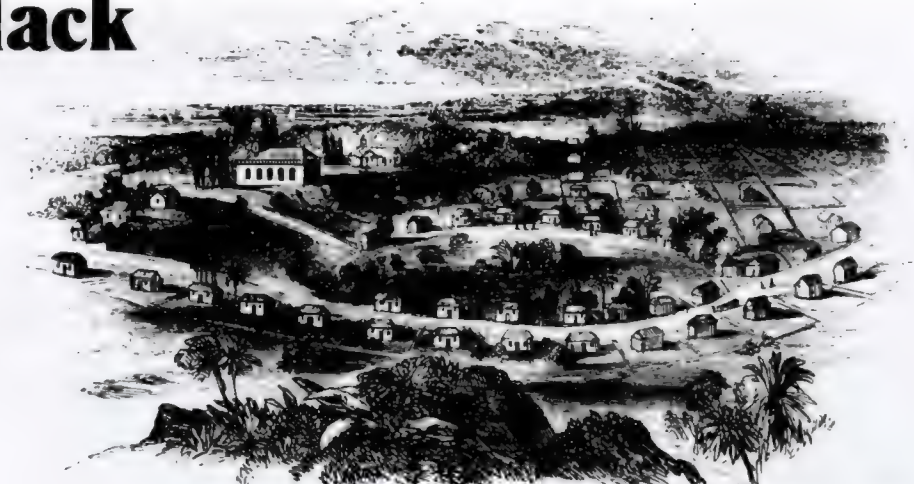
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The Emergence of the Christian Black

The Making of a Stereotype



Sligoville, first free village of the West Indies, with Mission premises (from J.M. Phillippo, *Jamaica Its Past and Present State*, 1843).

By Horace Russell

Slavery in the British Caribbean has a characteristic all its own. Nowhere, perhaps, is this portrayed more vividly than in the response of the Dissenters to the institution of slavery.

During the first half of the 19th century, missions in the region took on a new aspect. In Jamaica between 1814 and 1828 a new mood prevailed. First, the pressures exerted from the London government and the missionary headquarters demanded of the missionaries in the field certain new relationships at the local level. As a consequence, new alignments began to emerge which later were to form the basis of an international relevance for the work and a universal ideology. Second, the slaves themselves were not immune to these happenings and responded in their own way along the restricted channels available, contributing to relevance, alignment and universal ideology.

It was thus that both missionary and slave were to create between them an image or stereotype for the British public who had to be convinced that emancipation was necessary. The Christian Black, as this stereotype might be called, was in the beginning nothing more than a substitute for Quashie, the planters' stereotype. But in due course the Christian Black became more than a substitute. He became, for the European, a symbol of the true West Indian, and in time a model for the future understanding of and development of Africa and the Africans.

Between 1823 and 1832 the West Indian colonies were concerned with two things. In the first place, they were anxious to retain their preference in the British sugar market. Secondly, they wanted to preserve the *status quo* in order to exploit that market, in what some perceived to be the last of the halcyon days.

Dr. Eric Williams in *Capitalism and Slavery* [1944] summarized the issues well. He observed that the year 1823 itself, was pivotal in any understanding of the fortunes of the West Indies at that time.

It was the year in which the British government had made it clear to colonial interests that they had now been given time to set their house in order. It was the year in which

certain embarrassing questions had been asked in the House of Commons, the British parliament, with regard to the untimely death of the Rev. John Smith, a Congregational pastor in Guyana. The reports were that he had been maltreated in the Demerara jail because he had dared to oppose slavery and speak up for his black deacon, who had been arrested. The embarrassment lay not so much in parliament as in the constituencies, since the abolitionists were making great use of the incident at the street corners of London and in the pulpits of the nation.

It was also the year in which for the first time a serious bid was made to equalize the duties between West India and East India sugar in order to make them competitive.

Within the Caribbean itself the years 1823 - 4 were also of great moment for the churches. In Barbados the governor opposed the building of churches on the grounds that to build them was to encourage the assembly of blacks and turn their minds to plots and insurrection [C.O. 28/92 4 March 1823]. A similar view was expressed by the press in Spanish Town, Jamaica, where in reporting on the behaviour of a newly arrived Baptist missionary, James Mursell Phillippo, an overt link was made between his arrival and the behaviour and activities of the abolitionists in Britain. Indeed, he was thought to be a spy on their behalf seeking news about 'the Smith incident' in Demerara.

It was not long, therefore, before the local administrations in the West Indies enacted severe laws aimed at churches which favoured the cause of the slaves. These were laws which for the most part tended to create some alarm in London, prompting the Jamaican agent at one stage to assure Lord Bathurst that these "acts of the authorities were committed under peculiar circumstances of aggravated feelings, directed against an influence which was considered as highly prejudicial and dangerous to the interests of the island" [C. O. 137/165 3 May 1824].

This nervous reaction on the part of the plantocracy was due in part to a recognition that 'massa day was done' or at least on the wane. While in 1771, in a play called *The West Indian*, the planter had been portrayed as a man of immense

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The Voyage of the Sable Venus, from Angola to the West Indies. (Bryan Edwards, *History of the West Indies*, 4th. ed., II, 32).

wealth, he was now no longer so. In that play one of the characters remarked (of the West Indian) "He's very rich and that is sufficient. They say he has rum and sugar enough belonging to him, to make all the water in the Thames into punch" [Augier *et al.* 1960]. Now in 1820 real life, the Society of Merchants had decreed that West Indian plantations were no longer good collateral [Addresses and Memorials 1828].

If the financial situation tended to insecurity, public opinion itself was beginning to be openly hostile to the West Indian planter.

Anti-Slavery Activities

In Parliament on 4 March 1823, William Wilberforce, the celebrated parliamentarian, introduced a petition from the Quakers requesting the complete abolition of slavery on humanitarian grounds. The petition was lost [Parliamentary Papers Vol. VIII (New Series)]. Later that month, however, a similar petition was presented from Southwark which, although vigorously contested by Bright, the brilliant orator, the House did not completely reject. It was now left for Thomas Fowell Buxton, the parliamentary heir of Wilberforce to introduce a Bill in May of the same year, which attacked the philosophical and constitutional bases of slavery. It secured the amazing reaction from the West Indian lobby, which was that Parliament should leave slavery alone, and press on with amelioration — a sort of gradualism to which they had no objections.

It was at this time that a third force appeared; the East India sugar interests with whom, it appears, the abolitionists made common cause. In 1823, a lively pamphlet war occurred between Joseph Marryat, a supporter of the West Indian interest and William Whitmore, who wished equalization of duties [See Marryat 1823; Whitmore 1824]. As was to be expected, the question of slavery and its economic worth was dragged into the argument. This discussion made it quite clear that the West Indian planter was fighting on at least three fronts.

The planter protected himself in two ways: (a) he created a series of advantageous connections in Parliament and (b) he deliberately engaged in a series of excellent propaganda moves. The first protective device need not detain us here, it is the second with which we are more concerned.

On 1 June 1823, Lord Brougham initiated a full debate on the 'John Smith Affair' in Demerara and insisted on going into its gory details. This performance in Parliament, with the help of the Missionary Press, caught the public imagination. Soon the planters found themselves on the defensive and they fell back upon propaganda. They played upon the national fear of revolution and spread abroad the inherited stereotype of the African.

Despite the cries for emancipation, planter, parliamentarian and churchman were united in *one* fear: the fear of insurrection. For the planters, the truth of Corbett's words stand that "Many see symptoms of a country approaching to its ruin, but they fancy it may last their Time, and they may sell out and get home first and what comes afterward they care not" [Essays Concerning Slavery]. But they, at least for the moment, cared deeply about economic ruin and their own lives. The Abolitionists for their part feared upheavals in the society since these could provoke repressive measures by colonial governments. Also, the slave reaction could prove them wrong about the 'nature and quality' of African personality, the stereotype they had to use to convince the British

electorate. The churchmen for their part were apprehensive lest popular support should be alienated and their programme of missions endangered.

It must always be remembered that despite all the writing and talk about revolution, no one wanted a revolution from below. The harsh fact was that the imminence of insurrection or revolution dictated the pace of emancipation. And side by side with this for abolitionist and for churchman, the question presented itself in their more altruistic and serious moments: whether the romantic symbol of the African which they had come to accept and baptise with Christian meaning could in fact be realized and displace the commonly publicized stereotype of the planter.

This was a severe test for both groups because they desired more than a revolution. They desired a radical reformation and a new society to replace slavery. Slavery was for them not merely a system of cultivating the soil and managing plantations but a social system and a way of life, which they wished to replace. It was an attempt to create a new man.

The Stereotype (Planters)

Horace Orlando Patterson in his exhaustive study *The Sociology of Slavery* [1969] has left us in his debt by describing for us a stereotype of the black man commonly accepted by the plantocracy in the Caribbean. Patterson in a well-documented passage isolates the following: (a) *evasiveness*, i.e. taken in its widest context to include double talk, lying, deceit and deliberate annoyance (b) *laziness*, taken to mean deliberate sloth and malingering (c) *caprice* (d) *childishness* or childlikeness and (e) *lack of judgement*. Patterson observed that 'Quashie', as this stereotype was called, did in fact exist, "as a stereotyped conception held by the whites of their slaves; secondly, as a response on the part of the slave to this stereotype; and thirdly, as a psychological function of the real life situation of the slave". This is neither the time nor the place to examine the Patterson thesis with respect to the origins of Quashie, except to observe that the Patterson stereotype possesses an obvious masculine quality. What the missionaries and their allies did, it would appear, was use the African woman much more in the development of their new stereotype, and it was this that captured the imagination of the British public.

The Feminine Input

Dr. Patterson is quite right, and indeed Walvin's *Black Presence* [1971] only serves to underline this, that because of the outright brutality and unrestrained exploitation, even the most hardened planter needed some system of rationalization. That was the reason why the most easily patronized and worst characteristics of the slave were seized upon, elaborated and universalized. But this was not so with regard to the female, at all times.

Women play a major role in the society of the 19th century, the black woman not the least. Despite her ill-treatment and her degradation she retained what the man could not retain: 'some of her social status'. The black woman was a 'womb' and as such was mother and the harbinger of the future. With this the black man could not compete. He had to seek his status elsewhere either by cunning or brute strength, both in themselves part of an acquisitive society.

In any case, Jamaican society had a paucity of women. The contemporary evidence suggests that not only were there few white women but that the 'black' women formed one-sixth of the ratio of imports on the estates. Of course, these estimates are rough but by and large they lead to the single conclusion that women were scarce. Thus the female slave was exploited both by the headmen and the white men. And in that she was the ground of reconciliation.

This led naturally to the black woman and the coloured woman being treated as sexual objects and the development of a man-woman relationship more in terms of a master-slave relationship. She was the master's object of pleasure, seldom his companion. On the other hand, she was described in literature of the period as having magical powers which made her irresistible to men, powers which she obtained from the obeah man.

It is, however, important to notice that in all this it was the coloured woman who earned the wrath of both white and black, on the grounds that she was contemptuous of her own, preferring to be the white man's mistress than the black or coloured man's wife. As far as the white woman was concerned, the contemporary picture is that she was illiterate for the most part, cruel and spiteful to her slaves, a lover of dances and somewhat like 'Quashie'. She was, however, the mother of legitimate children and a shadowy, long-suffering, dull person in the background.

There is another aspect that is sometimes overlooked and that is the threat posed by the coloured woman to both master and slave, because she was a symbol to them both. Perhaps it was to overcome this that she was unconsciously made into a stereotype and condemned. Maybe Annee Palmer — the White Witch of Rose Hall could be explained in these terms. It was a love-hate relationship. She was feared because given the norms of the plantocracy, i.e. by birth, she belonged to it, but her colour identified her with the slave population, a fact reinforced by law and prejudice. As far as the relationship between the coloured woman and the black woman was concerned, she was a symbol both of freedom and betrayal. To the white woman she was a symbol of weakness: her own weakness and the coloured woman's power. It was almost inevitable therefore that the coloured woman came to be looked upon or actually did become a prostitute, that well-known symbol of self-hate and destruction.

Insurrection

With this unsettled state of affairs it was inevitable that in 1831, when a revolt broke out in Jamaica [See Reckord 1968] it created a stir in London, both in Parliament and at the missionary headquarters. The parliamentary parties redoubled their efforts to discover a common ground for emancipation in order to get it done quickly, while the missionaries tried hard to prop up the establishment and deny all complicity in the sorry affair. It was this event that gave added impetus to the discovery of the 'Christian Black'.

The Noble Savage

David Davis, in his well known work, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* [1970], maintains that up to the end of the 15th century, the Church had not condemned slavery but instead had worked out a series of compromises. He further suggests that "the Christian view of slavery accommodated a series of balanced dualisms. Slavery was contrary to the realms of Nature, but was a necessary part of the

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'Christian Blacks' and Chapel (from P.T. Rees, *Gwylad n Negro*, 1890).

world of sin; the bondman was inwardly free and spiritually equal to his master; in things external he was a mere chattel; Christians were brothers whether slave or free but pagans deserved in some sense to be slaves".

This dilemma left its imprint upon the abolitionists who together with all churchmen had not yet thought through the questions of (a) work and (b) the relation between slavery and sin. It was indeed significant that in 1823, Dr. Francis Cox of the Baptist Missionary Society was invited to present a paper on whether it was sinful to be a slaveholder, and as late as 1840, Cox was addressing the Anti-Slavery Convention in London on the question as to whether a slave holder should be allowed to sit at the Lord's Table [Minutes 1840].

It was at this crucial stage that three ideas came to the fore more noticeably than the others. They were: (a) the idea of the Noble Savage, derived most probably from the notion of the Sublime, set in a Kantian mould (b) the rejection of the notion of the irrationality of the black and the declaration of his humanity, in the face of the new Science and (c) the twin desires to establish the 'freed black', as a Christian peasant farmer, either in Africa or the colonies.

The idea of the Noble Savage has been overworked by scholars, but it needs always to be considered in this context. The idea probably derived from Plato and his idea of the numinous. And it is in a sense the rejection of Aristotle and all that he stood for, including his views on slavery. It has often been remarked, and Coleridge himself once said it, that there is a quantum of truth in the assertion that we are all born Aristotelians or Platonists. The idea of the Sublime catches the fancy and the imagination of all men, and the 16th century adventurers were no exception. They linked the possibility of a New World with the idea of uncorrupted Nature and an ideal by which European customs could be judged. It symbolized a world in which there existed simple primaevial man free from distractions of private possessions or greed. But it was not long before admiration became protection. The 'simple native' had to be protected from himself in order to discipline him so that he might live or at least be able to fend for himself in the *real* world. Thus a dichotomy arose — the conqueror wished to preserve the Noble Savage on the one hand, but on the other, despised him.



Female Negro Peasant in her Sunday and Working Dress (from J.M. Phillippo, *Jamaica its Past and Present State*, 1843).

The question now arises: was the African considered in these terms. The answer to that is, at the beginning: no. The evidence suggests that the African had no such fascination for the European either on philosophical or religious grounds. Darkness had for a long time been a peculiar philosophical problem for the European. And the skin of the African so approximated to Darkness that it was inevitable that he should become a part of that problem. (This discussion on the philosophical problem of Darkness or Blackness is a necessary one but this is not the place to expand it). It is enough to be reminded that at the very outset the African, unlike the Indian, was a philosophical problem. He was also a religious problem because the Moors had ruled Spain and Portugal. To the Christian Spanish, therefore, the African was tainted with Islam, and so he was of the old world, the decadent world of antiquity. The African also appeared in the Bible and as such ought to have been Christian. Thus the argument arose that the African deserved his slavery because he had rejected Christian teaching. Indeed, a missionary to the French West Indies observed that the 'black' conformed to Aristotle's view of a slave, as an instrument of his master's will [Du Tertre Vol II, pp 364-419; 490]. Thus the blackness of the skin was seen as a mark of misfortune, and physical labour the penalty for rebellion against God. In short, on the best interpretation, the black was a Noble Savage fallen from grace.

It took most of the 18th and 19th centuries to begin to observe the political effect of these ideas. For instance, Rousseau's Noble Savage is that same noble creature which we discussed, and so too was Mills's 'man of the woods'. Indeed the whole romantic movement was built upon this view of pristine innocence, which had in time to display its political and social effect.

Romanticism had two effects. First, it led to the romanticizing of the 'middle passage' and, by extension, the plantation (a romantic view which both Stephen Foster and Black Spirituals tend to support). Thus the writings of the planters and even missionaries paint a picture of 'turbaned negroes and negresses (who) sang as they worked the cane and cotton fields by day, and spent the night drinking, dancing and making love, reared happy families of sportive picanninies

and liked and respected their white masters, their indolent whey-faced wives and their spoilt children" [Pope-Hennessy 1970 p.124]. This picture was not seriously challenged until recent exhaustive studies of the plantation, among them *Persistent Poverty* by George Beckford, of the University of the West Indies.

Romanticism also led to the attempt to redeem the 'fallen savage'. An example of this redemption motif might be seen in the 'Sable Venus' legend. This was a representation of a well-formed and voluptuous black woman attended by her ethereal servants (all white) floating above the blue sea. Some authorities link the legend with Angola, others with Jamaica. This does not matter. What matters is that there is little doubt that the Sable Venus was a Madonna — a Black Madonna, who scattered blessings upon the grateful land. It is fair to say then that there was a definite attempt in certain quarters to contrast pristine 'freedom' with the implication of innocence and the actual state of slavery with its implication of guilt. Any hope for the African must, therefore, be in redemption [ibid. p.124].

Redemptive Hope

A good example of this redemptive hope can be discerned in James Montgomery's poem "West Indies", which was an important bit of anti-slavery propaganda published in 1808. The African is portrayed in:

*A world of wonders where
creation seems
No more the work of Nature but
her dreams.*

and

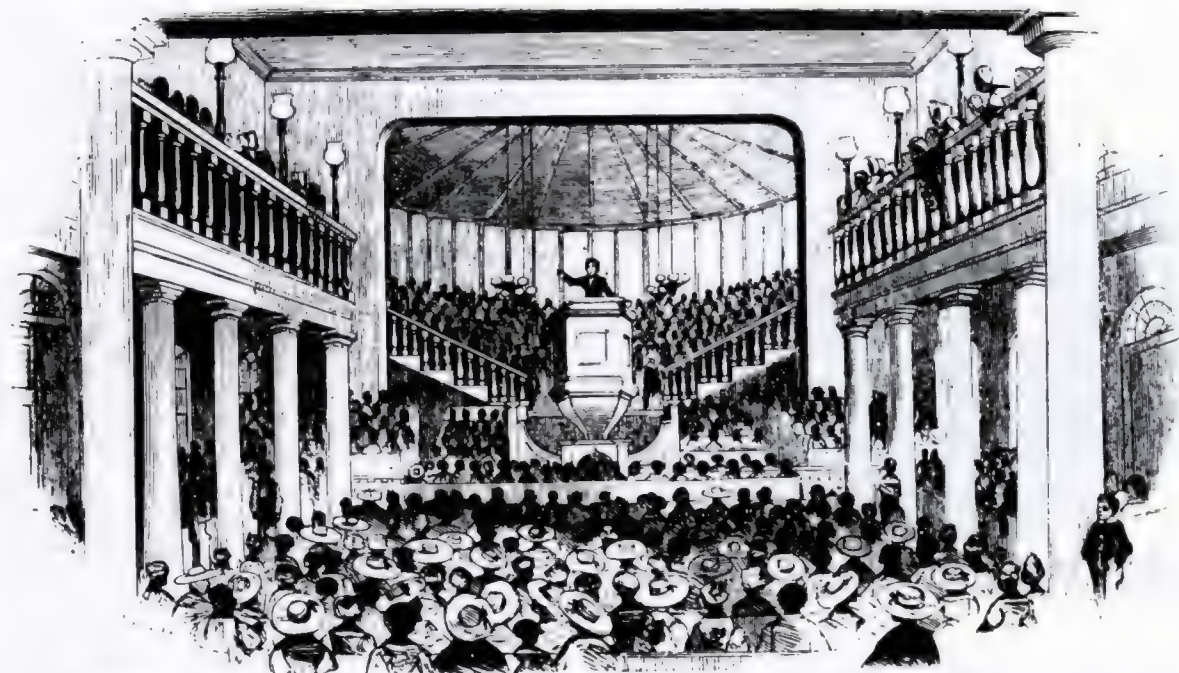
*In romantic regions man grows
wild
Here dwells the Negro Nature's
outcast child.*

Thus then lives the African in an idyllic setting of mystic nature as the 'Black Savage' outcast. He is guilty and innocent, fulfilling in one sentence the ambivalence of contemporary Christian thinking.

However, this primitive might yet hope because these very attitudes can be disciplined:

*But his mother's eye
That gazes on him from her
warmest sky
Sees in his flexile limb untutored
grace
Power on his forehead, beauty in
his face
Sees in his breast where lawless
passions rove
The heart of friendship and the
home of love.*

The black man can yet be saved! Indeed, Montgomery takes the concept a step further. He universalizes the idea of the Fall and Innocence and puts it into a historical context. For instance, in his introduction to part III of the poem, he observed that for the African, as for all men, it was true that "The love of country and of Home, the same all Ages and among all Nations". Surprisingly, he still clung to the older



Interior of Baptist Chapel, Spanish Town (J.M. Phillippo, Jamaica Its Past and Present State, 1843).

notion that the Fall of the New World ought to be linked to the invasions of the whites, but in contrast he does give to that notion some basis in history. In a sense we now have the Christian Black whom he described as

*a humble pilgrim who wakes to
life and springs to liberty*

so that

*with humble steps the paths of
peace he trod
A happy pilgrim for he walks with
God.*

The African As Human

It was one thing to invent the Christian Black as an ideal person, but it was another thing to create his acceptance as a 'human being'. This was a more difficult task. As late as 1848, the battle was still raging in the anti-slavery meetings. It will be remembered that it was in that year that William Armistead published *A Tribute to the Negro, being a vindication of the moral, intellectual and religious capabilities of the Coloured portion of Mankind, with particular reference to the African race, etc.* In it he defines his purpose as to combat:

The supporters and advocates of Negro Slavery [who] however in order to justify their oppressive conduct, profess either in ignorance or affected philosophy to doubt the African's claim to Humanity, alleging their incapacity from inherent defects of mental constitution, to enjoy the blessings of freedom or to exercise their rights which were equally bestowed by a beneficent Creator upon all his rational creatures.

This rationalization of the African's servitude was for the most part due to ignorance, but it was also due to the first attempts at European anthropology, as a science.

In this regard, mention must be made of the comments of Edward Long, in his *History of Jamaica* [1774 Book 3 pp. 256 ff.], who maintained that "the nature of these men [blacks] and their dissimilarity to the rest of mankind . . . [leads us to] conclude that they are a different species of

the same genius". Even William Beckford, an otherwise level-headed commentator, expressed uncertainty on the point but hoped that "if their faculties be more weak, they may be strengthened by science; if their disposition more savage, they may be softened by examples of humanity, if ignorant of the social and moral obligations of life, they may be taught the first by indulgence and by religion the last" [1788 p.61].

The missionaries and humanists for their part rebutted on three grounds: (a) by teaching and preaching the orthodox doctrine of Creation, that of the unitary nature of Creation (b) by pointing to Africans who had shown educational achievement and prowess in Europe (c) by stressing the argument that climatic conditions was the reason for the dissimilarity.

As early as 1789, in a letter preserved in an American museum written by a free black, the theory of genetic and moral inferiority was challenged. He asserted that "the natural depravity of our character be proved . . . though avarice may slander and insult our misery, the fact is that treated like other men, and admitted to participation of their rights we should differ from them in nothing, perhaps but in our possessing stronger passions, nicer sensibility and more enthusiastic virtue" [*Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 1 No. 1 pp; 62-3].

Indeed, about this same time, the Duke of Montague who was curious about these matters, sent one of his slaves, Francis Williams of Jamaica, to Cambridge University. There he distinguished himself and on his graduation returned to set up a school.

The missionaries, particularly the Baptists, had for a long time attempted to treat slaves as equals, calling them and being called 'Brothers and Sisters', phrases to which the planters objected. They stressed 'conversion' and 'church discipline'. There was almost an obsession with church discipline on the part of the missionaries and many of the church controversies of the period centre upon this subject. It would appear that failure to produce a 'black moral person' was tantamount to failure to reinstate the African into the human

race. It seems quite likely that it was at this time that the black man assumed the awesome responsibility of being the moral conscience of the world.

There is another aspect of this question and it is that of education. If missionaries pointed to the moral achievements of their black congregations, they also pointed to their educational attainments. Phillippo, one of the longest serving missionaries, certainly pointed to both, and the Quakers put a lot of money into education. Indeed education became the panacea for all the ills of the sugar-colonies after 1833, in line with the pragmatic proof offered by missionaries in the preceding decades. The education which was offered was to be based "upon liberal and comprehensive principles for the religious and moral education of the Negro to be emancipated" [Phillippo 1843 p.301; cf. Shirley Gordon 1963 pp. 19-21]. When the Baptists, however, decided that this meant a university on the pattern of London University, it did not get support. The African was rational and so, human; but this was going too fast.

With regard to science — the arguments could support either side. And since the "age of reason by a strange paradox was also the age of superstition" it was necessary to discover some rational argument which together with the authority of the Church, now seriously questioned, could stand the test. Up to this point the humanity of the African rested solely upon Church doctrine and the Church therefore allied itself with scientists who maintained the 'climatic' theory. This theory that climate was responsible for the colour of the African skin was reinforced with a stark Biblicism, a fact which can be observed in the letters and documents of the time. Despite this, science did a great service at this point, it universalized the Fall and also Salvation so that the latter was now the African's *by right*, in Christ. There were, of course, varying interpretations of this right. Some maintained that the suffering of the African was vicarious for the whole world, while others repeatedly identifying the theory of racial inferiority with Hume, Voltaire and materialistic philosophy in general, made the idea less palatable.

The Christian Servant

It has been sometimes observed that the abolitionists made the black into a stereotype and after emancipation found it difficult to cope with the reality. While it must be admitted that there were some negative aspects to the new stereotype, positively their aim was to develop a Christian servant within a peasant environment.

The question now arises: where did the abolitionists obtain their model?

Christopher Hill, in his book *British Economic and Social History — 1700 - 1964* [1970], in describing agriculture lays emphasis upon the great change which occurred in the 19th century. Although he cannot maintain that the term 'Agrarian Revolution' is a good description of what happened in England between 1700 - 1850, he nevertheless suggests that the changes were immense, and that the conditions of those who lived in the countryside were radically altered. He maintains that the revolution involved two closely related sorts of change. The first was a series of technical improvements in farming — new crops and new implements, new rotation of crops and new achievement in stock breeding. The second was the gradual replacement of open fields by enclosures [pp.10-16].

It would appear that it was upon these 'two closely re-

lated sorts of change' that both the abolitionists and the missionaries developed their idea of the Christian Black.

During the period culminating in 1833, the legal foundation for emancipation had been slowly laid by the abolitionists in Parliament. In 1824, for example, Dr. Lushington had championed in Parliament the cause of Lescene and Escoffery, two coloureds who had lost their rights as citizens of Jamaica. With the restoration of their rights, the signal for the complete recognition of the rights of all coloureds had been given. Indeed so quickly did it move that Henry Duncan, in a letter to Sir George Murray could observe in 1830 that "In Jamaica alone they [coloureds] are in possession of wealth which on a moderate computation has been estimated at not less than three million sterling" [p.93]. By 1839, Governor Metcalfe could maintain that the coloureds held the balance of power.

Increasingly then, the missionaries made overtures to the coloureds in order to have their political support for needed reforms. Had the elections of 1839 been held, the House of Assembly would most securely have returned a large majority of coloured, but the governor saw to it that these elections did not take place. But with or without the vote, the missionaries had a model of the freed peasant in mind and this they now turned to develop through the Free Villages.

The Free Villages

These 'Free Villages' [see Paget 1964] were a social and political counter-balance to the plantation. In a sense the plantation had reproduced the open land system. There was the Great House (the counterpart of the Manor House); the sugar cane plantations (the open fields); the slave villages (the peasant cottages); and the Common, an open plot used in both systems for communal festivities. In short, the changes which emancipation brought to the Caribbean were parallel to those taking place in Britain, and people were quick to see it. But there was a big difference; for although the agricultural labourer in Britain was poor and ill-treated he was still British, in contrast to the African who was still an alien. It was this emotional reason that some abolitionists understood — that desire to be independent and free.

William Knibb, the Baptist minister at Refuge in Jamaica and who made his name as a leader in the emancipation discussions, advised his members in these words:

A fair scale of wages must be established, and you must be entirely independent. If you continue to receive allowances which have been given you during slavery and apprenticeship, it will go abroad that you are not able to take care of yourselves and that your employers are obliged to provide you with allowances to keep you from starvation.

In such a case you will be nothing more than slaves. To be free you must be independent. Receive your money for your work; come to market with money; purchase from whom you please; and be accountable to no one but the Being above, whom I trust will watch over you and protect you [Hinton 1845 p.289].

This is why the Baptists did not advocate allotments *per se* but a plot of land which the free slave owned. As Amy Lopez observed [1948 p.291], "the mark of freedom is to be able to have his own 'ground' which he works himself and from which he makes enough to support his family".

It must not be assumed that there were not other points of view. There were some landowners like Henry Ross of Grenada, a barrister, who published a pamphlet to disseminate

his views. He argued that a system of allotments would have been inevitable in the Caribbean had it not been for the enslavement of the African. But now that the African was free it was an opportune time to introduce it. This view did not win the day and so did not impede the growth of the Free Villages, which became a symbol of the 'free land-owning peasantry' and as such an alternative political force in the colonies.

These happenings in the West Indies did not go unnoticed in Great Britain. They in fact contributed to the split in the anti-slavery movement. There was on the one hand, the Wilberforce-Buxton wing which had resisted all land reforms in Britain and carried it one step further into the colonies. On the other hand, there was the Clarkson-Sturge wing which involved itself increasingly in procuring land and settling displaced slaves. In 1840, for instance, Sturge formed a 'Land Company', to finance the buying up of disused estates in order to divide them into villages for the people, for which they paid on a long term basis at no increased cost. It is enough to observe that the Company did not last long, having been sabotaged by other interests. What is also important is that the plots in these villages were of that regulation size that gave the legal owner a vote. It was this that created the fear. For in one action, Sturge had created a black citizen and also the possibility of a political alternative.

Conclusion

The events of 1823 - 1840 are as remarkable as they are sad. And yet it is to be hoped that they contain also some seeds of hope for mankind.

The events are remarkable because what occurred was not just the settlement of a people or the acculturation of the African but the creation of a new man. Here was a new creature with firm roots in a new habitat — a man who was old and yet new.

These happenings were sad because for a long time this new man took his standards from a Europe which had created him. It was a Europe which in the words of Frantz Fanon, 'undertook the leadership of the world with ardour, cynicism and violence . . . but set her face against all solicitude and tenderness' [1965 p.252]. But this new man was not a European. He did not have to 'search for Man in the technique and the style of Europe'. Rather, as Fanon continues (and he as a Martinican was a Christian black);

Humanity is waiting for something other from us than such an imitation, which would almost be an obscene caricature. If we want to turn Africa into a new Europe; or America into a new Europe; then let us leave the destiny of our countries to Europeans. They will know how to do it better than the most gifted of us.

But if we want humanity to advance further, if we want to bring it up to a different level than that which Europe has shown it, then we must invent and we must make discoveries . . . For Europe, for ourselves and for humanity. We must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man [p.255].

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REVIEWS

DANCE

NDTC AT 20

By Wycliffe Bennett

Every July/August since 1962, the National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica has presented a season of dance at the Little Theatre. Under the guidance of artistic director/co-founder, Rex Nettleford, the 1982 season climaxed the celebrations to commemorate the Company's 20th anniversary. In the two decades, the NDTC has become synonymous with talent, discipline and achievement in Jamaica and has brought praise and prestige to Jamaica abroad. In addition to presenting in Jamaica a season and a mini-season annually, the 60 member troupe has performed in many other parts of the world, including the United Kingdom, the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, the Soviet Union, West Germany, Mexico, and other Caribbean territories.

The celebrations have confirmed this writer's view that in Jamaica the dance has become a valid expression of a specific country and time — that it is an emerging Jamaican art. That this is so is due largely to the efforts of the NDTC over the last two decades.

For the NDTC, 1982 has been a great year. But things were not all that rosy 20 years ago. The Company had to overcome many obstacles — prejudice and downright hostility at home, and misunderstanding and at times arrogance abroad.

Even as we ushered in Independence in 1962, many Jamaicans who pretended to any kind of status disapproved of 'barefoot dancing' and the presentation of anything that savoured of Africa.

I heard upright men and women dismiss *African Scenario* as 'a piece of obscenity and a disgrace' when it was premiered in *Roots and Rhythms* in 1962.

Some early critics overseas had diffi-

culty finding a ready-made category to which they could comfortably assign the Company and were tempted to dismiss the troupe as another of those artistic aberrations that wandered into their domain from time to time.

The truth of the matter is that, if at this moment in time some earlier works can be classified as derivative, it should by now be recognized that, from the very outset, the foundations were being laid for what has become stylistically one of the more eclectic of major companies operating today: the ballet from Europe; ritual from Africa; jazz and modern from America; and traditional, folk, national and contemporary from the three continents. Of course, all of these ingredients have become creolized and the Company is more rooted in the Jamaican and wider Caribbean experience than in anything else.

In 20 years the Company has forged a language, building a vocabulary and a syntax where need and opportunity allow; and has achieved a consistency in forms, rhythms and dynamics, which is one of the touchstones of style.

But the prime concern is with the human condition; and this is often presented within the matrix of great themes — mythical, legendary or biblical — and ranges from subjects of epic dimensions to the more immediate commonplace.

Beginning with the show, *Roots and Rhythms*, staged during Jamaica's Independence celebrations in 1962, the Company has developed a repertoire of over 100 works. Nettleford remains the major choreographer with 43 works. Others include Eddy Thomas, who created 9 before he left the group in 1966; Neville Black who had done 11 up to 1969; and Sheila Barnett and Bert Rose with 15 and 9 respectively. From time to time other members of the group will produce an isolated piece, or the Company will have a guest choreographer for a season.

The 1982 season added five new works: *Litany* and *The Visitor* (an allegorical tale) by Rex Nettleford; *Fantasy*

(a young man's dream of the ideal woman) by Barbara Requa; *Just Time* (a solo dedicated to Barry Moncrieffe) and *Phases — Part A* (a dance in four movements dedicated to Sheila Barnett), both by Tony Wilson.

Some 20 works were staged during the celebrations, including the five new ones. Devotees will have noted the absence, among others, of such pieces as Eddy Thomas's *And it came to pass* (1964); Sheila Barnett's *Mountain Women* (1972) and *I not I* (1977), a picaresque piece on Pitchy Patchy; Bert Rose's *Switch* (1977), based upon the Legend of the White Witch of Rosehall; and Rex Nettleford's own *Myal* (1974) and *Court of Jah* (1975). These would have added depth to the perspective on the Company. There was, nevertheless, a rich feast, and the offering was wide in range, and provided some of the finest nights of theatre it has been my privilege to attend either at home or abroad.

Critics have to remind themselves that the Company is continually refining and polishing its repertoire, that even within a single season, an old or new work will improve almost beyond recognition. This is especially so, it seems, where there are alternating casts which, in a competitive spirit of the best type, pace each other on the road to excellence.

This happened to a marked degree this year with the revival of Nettleford's *Dialogue for Three* (1963) and one of his new works, *The Visitor*, as well as with Barbara Requa's maiden offering, *Fantasy*. The same cannot be said for Tony Wilson's solo piece, *Just Time*, in which the choice of inconsequential music led to inconsequential choreography.

But even *Dialogue for Three* would have been a stronger composition had the music been more in consonance with the twists and tensions of the eternal triangle. Joaquin Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* did not always have the densities when the choreography needed it. Often there were exciting moments when music and dance were in

conjunction; and we saw some inspired performances with Barry Moncrieffe as the Man, Judith Pennant or Jacquie Smith as the Wife and Melanie Cooke-Graham or Sandra Minott as the Other Woman. I did not see Jacquie Smith, but I saw Judith Pennant, who brought a warmth and a simplicity to the role of Mother. I thought her cradling of the baby could have been just a bit more positive, within the rhythm set up by the music, as Sheila Barnett's was in the extant film of that performance years ago. Sandra Minott demonstrated star quality as the Other Woman, fiery and sensuous; and when I was about to dismiss from my mind Cooke-Graham as being rather too cold to be taken seriously as a contender for that role, she pulled out all the stops on the closing Sunday afternoon. During the final moments of the piece, when Cooke-Graham in dramatic reversal turned her back upon the scene and brought down her hands in final rejection of the Man — that statement will certainly remain one of the more memorable moments of the season.

Nettleford's allegorical tale, *The Visitor* is set in New Orleans. Susan Alexander's decor with white wrought iron furniture and crimson tapestry creates the setting for this house of assignation. The Madame and her two assistants have decked themselves out in garish finery for such guests as fortune might bring. Enter *The Visitor*, elegant, commanding, a fine catch for any of the three ladies of the night. He goes into the bedroom and soon pieces of clothing are flung back into the salon. *The Visitor* returns — a cadaverous figure of a man. A more macabre atmosphere would have been realized had the designer introduced a strong tinge of green into the lighting at this stage. Aaron Copland's *Danzon Cubano* provided scope for those voluptuous movements and gestures that characterise the denizens of such a *milieu*. More importantly, the music also has a trajectory that parallels the development of the choreography, which would have been helped

by a stronger suggestion of rigor mortis before Death with great flourish orchestrated that final note. Duran Hylton and Tony Wilson alternately bring their special qualities to the title role — Duran Hylton essentially dramatic, Wilson the more lyrical. I never cease to be amazed at Hylton's elevation and simulation of height. Cooke-Graham as the Madame has the technical proficiency. If she would give herself more to the inner demands of her roles, she would be an even greater asset to the Company. *The Visitor* is a new piece that will mellow like wine.

Barbara Requa has of course choreographed for the Juniors at the Jamaica School of Dance, but *Fantasy* marks her debut as a choreographer for the Company. It was indeed an impressive beginning, demonstrating a fluency of style, a knowledge of characterization and a use of the stage, that should prove to be great assets to her in the future. It was a source of delight to watch alternating teams perform this work, and how they apparently benefitted from observing each other. She used Chick Corea's music well. In *Fantasy* a young man dreams of the ideal woman. Three different types appear in his dream, each having some attractive points; but the more he probes what he sees the more elusive becomes all that he most desires. The deft use of scarves by the women underscores the fragile nature of each encounter, and the choreographer leaves with us the gossamer texture of a dream.

The remaining two new works were Wilson's *Phases — Part A* and Nettleford's *Litany*, both of which employ the full or almost the full corps of dancers.

There can be no doubt that Wilson's dance in four movements pushes the NDTC beyond its ordinary range of sensibility, and brings fresh nuances and body accents to the Company's experience of the dance. A product of the NDTC himself, Wilson shows the benefit of his North American sojourn, his exposure to another milieu, the black and white jazz tradition, the sharp

movements of the windy city, the concrete and steel of Chicago. He chooses music from Leonard Bernstein, Duke Ellington and Herbie Hancock, all within the genre of his composition. The impact of the dance would have been considerably increased by cutting at least 8 minutes off the 23 minutes playing time. There were however, more serious problems: the often too facile use of the melodic line or rhythm, without a feeling for the whole density of the music; and the failure to exploit his own rhythm, without losing contact with the peaks and valleys of the music.

Within the Company itself there are superb models to follow. Note, for example in *Misa Criolla* how Nettleford's shimmering line expands the aesthetic range of Ariel Ramirez's music or the fabulous fusion of the two muses when he calls upon Quincy Jones's score for *The Crossing* (1978).

The aficionado will have followed the building of vocabulary and syntax by Nettleford over the years, exemplified in *Folk Forms* (1968) *Celebrations* (1972), *Homage* (1973), *Elements* (1978), *Drumscore* (1979) and now in *Litany* (1982).

I believe that, in some respects *Litany* is intended to be a biographical piece on the Company. The programme note reads,

"For those who sow and will not nurture, Good Lord deliver us! (A dedication to those who sow as well as reap)."

I believe too that as a celebration of growth, *Litany* has the potential to become a great work. At present some of the metaphors are not clear, and at times surprisingly we get what seems an unintentionally messy floor pattern. I was not sure whether the four dancers who formed a circle at the beginning were nuns or mother figures; and except in the ring game section which was joyously portrayed, the directorial

image which would have been necessary to indicate each phase of growth, did not have the customary Nettlefordian authority. The music seemed somewhat hollow. This is not intended as a stricture on the musical director who is expected to, and often does, perform musical miracles with limited resources each night. But if good old-fashioned hymn-singing was required, this too should have been theatricalized into something transcendental, and imbued with modern resonances. Above all the final epiphany should have enthralled me as *Kumina* did, when it first went into orbit in 1971. And here I think lighting and decor would have helped. I wanted much more: I wanted, perhaps, the cyclorama radiant with heavenly hosts, joining with the celebrants on stage in jubilant thanksgiving.

Mr. Bennett is writing a history of the Jamaican theatre.

BOOKS

MEN ACTING AS MEN: JOHN HEARNE'S THE SURE SALVATION

By Edward Baugh

John Hearne, *The Sure Salvation*, London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1981, 224 pp., £6.50.

It is the year 1860. Charles Darwin's world-changing book *The Origin of Species* has been out a year now. The railway is still a marvel. 'Sail and wood' have begun to give way to 'steel and steam', to the greater glory of British mercantile and imperial expansion. The American Civil War is not a long way off, and 'those damned foreign pamphlets on socialism' have begun to cause a stir. The world is turning. But in the South Atlantic, somewhere between Angola and Brazil, the *Sure Salvation*, under the command of Captain William Hogarth, lies becalmed,

'ringed by the unbroken crust of its own garbage'.

From the very first sentence, Hearne stamps on the reader's senses the feeling of seething, unhealthy tension, of festering paralysis and doom in which the ship is held. The widening ring of filth, which exudes its own morbid fascination, is the symbol of the moral and spiritual corruption of the ship's 'dirty, dishonourable business', which in turn represents the rot at the heart of a civilization, the perversion of its virtues in the pursuit of wealth. For the *Sure Salvation* is the 'last of the slavers'. Although slavery had been legally abolished for some little time, the 'dirty trade' still lingered, because there were a few men daring and unscrupulous enough to take the risk for the rich rewards that were to be had on this 'black market'. Captain Hogarth an English gentleman much seized of ideas of honour and conscience, but of little wealth, was hardly one of those, and the very fact that he has been brought to this sordid pass is indicative of the power of the general corruption. The curve of his life's graph images the history of that corruption.

The calm does not break until near the end of the novel, which then moves to a climax as swift as the waiting was long; and the swiftness of the climax, in relation to the seeming timelessness and inconclusiveness of the waiting, intensifies the idea of the inevitability of the doom which awaited the ship, a doom whose specific form Hogarth could not have begun to imagine when the premonition of failure came to him early in the calm: "Failure had been waiting for him like an uncharted sargasso here in the open ocean, and he had sailed his life into the clutch of its invisible tendrils."

Hogarth is the protagonist. It is with his life and tragedy that Hearne is most involved, as we watch him torturing himself in slow penance in the cell of his 'honour'. We see in him the anguish of idealism, principle and honour tarnished and soured, making one last desperate

and futile grasp at 'success'. But Hogarth is surrounded by a gallery of memorable characters, each turning on its particular, obsessive, flawed centre of self. For example, there is Dunn, burning with an implacable proletarian hatred of all authority and privilege, a hatred fuelled by humiliating memories of deprivation. He restrains his rage only in the certain faith that one day the edifice of class and hierarchy will be razed by the joyful fires of apocalypse.

Dunn is in sharp contrast to the bloodless Bullen, one of his superiors, a Uriah Heep of a creature:

A thin, pale wedge of flesh appeared round the forward starboard corner of the midshiphouse; a face topped by a limp and faded officer's cap pushed back on dark brown hair, fine as thistledown, straight as thread. The body that followed the face onto the open deck was like some immensely elongated, knobbly and tasteless vegetable grown in the dark, pathetically and pallidly striving towards the light.

Most fascinating of all is Alex Delfosse, the black adventurer from Louisiana, who goes nowhere without his 'free papers' and his baptismal certificate, a character perhaps less 'real' than Hogarth and the rest, a figure out of legend rather than life. He is the ship's cook, but he enjoys a presence and commands a respect far above what one would expect of his station. As it turns out, that station is only an expedient cover for his true power. He is cast in heroic mould, with his own tragic flaw. He is at one and the same time a version of the 'bad-ass nigger' of modern Black American mythology and the type of the revolutionary-who-would-be-king. He is refreshing as a black hero who, while being, no less than the rest of us, History's victim, does not spend his time, like so many protagonists of West Indian fiction, lamenting history and wearing his *angst* on his sleeve.

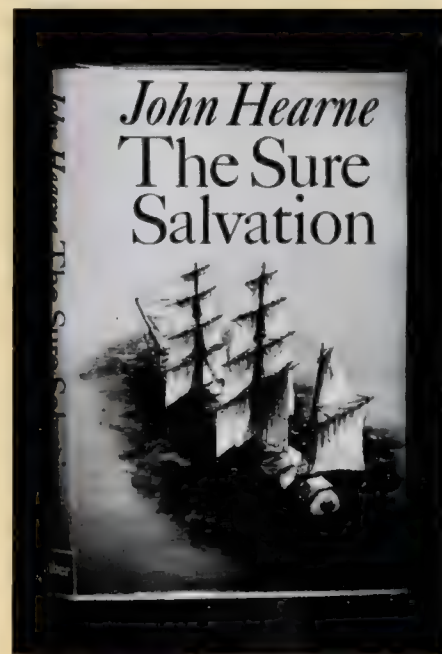
During the 14 chapters of waiting for the breeze, not much happens 'on the surface' by way of event, but Hearne keeps the tension hawser-taut, knowing

just when and how to introduce some sudden spurt of violence, or some new piece of information to whet the reader's appetite. It is not until near the end of chapter two that we get the first hint of the ship's cargo of abused humanity, in the 'acid, heavy smell' that rises momentarily from the hatch, and "the chorus of moans that [rise] and burst wetly on the deck like the fat sticky bubbles on the skin of a sulphur pit". It is not until chapter four that we actually see the monstrous secret which the ship holds, as the slaves are brought up on deck for air, exercise and hosing-down. The precise and carefully defensive precautions with which the crew handle this manoeuvre convey their unspoken fear and the explosive potential which must attend any such violent and unnatural coming-together of peoples.

The ship's cargo, hidden, battened down, forcibly repressed, becomes an infinitely accommodating symbol for all the unspeakable, threatening secrets clamped below the hatches of the world's mind. More specifically, it becomes an analogue of the dark secrets hidden in the minds of so many of the crew, secrets which feed and explain their fear or hate or ambition or greed or lust or desire for revenge as the case may be — secrets such as those embodied in the austere, mysterious presence of Hogarth's wife on the ship.

In those first 14 chapters, which really contain all that the book is about (the rest, necessary as it is, is just *denouement*) — in those 14 chapters the happenings and the waiting aboard the ship are interwoven with flashbacks which take us into the lives of each character, in such a way as to increase gradually our sense of some inevitable eruption. The tension is not just the simple basic one created by the juxtaposition of the crew and their human cargo. There is a web of tensions among the crew themselves, which feeds on the tensions within each individual, those tensions being centrally dramatized in the strange relationship between the Captain and his wife, Elizabeth.

Each segment in the mosaic of past and present and of the diverse points-of-view of the characters is laid with careful assurance and to striking effect. We note, for example, how the flashback to Hogarth's first meeting with Alex (chapter 14) is placed right after the reader is made aware (chapter 13) of Alex's scheme for mutiny; or how Tadene, the old African woman's point of view, in the same segment of the novel, is juxtaposed with Alex's; or how, climatically, the anxious calm, literal and metaphorical, which had held the ship, breaks immediately after the disclosure, through flashback, of the secret of the terrible bond between Captain Hogarth and Elizabeth.



This careful, assured structure, like the studied, chill intensity of the style, fits nicely with the whole mood and meaning of the work, with, for example, the idea of inexorable destiny, not necessarily in the sense of some abstract force manipulating human life, but also in the sense that there is within each individual a sort of mind-set which, when brought into contact with other mind-sets, will lead to seemingly predetermined entanglements and conclusions.

As Alex puts it, to Hogarth: "You and me could no more help meetin' up the way we done than we could help bein' born the way each of us was."

With regard to style: although we distinguish a general colouring, this is made up of a variety of hues, shifting to reflect the sensibility of each character through whose eyes we are made to see the action. For example, the severe, intense, brooding voice of Hogarth is felicitously different from the racy, rough-shod, 'tough-guy' voice of Alex, and both from the fresh, innocent, wondering voice of the slave-girl Mtishta. We appreciate, too, that, whereas Hogarth's language is typified by imagery of the sea and navigation, Alex's is coloured by imagery of cattle-herders and card-sharps, drawn from his early formative experience ("She'll ride herd on the niggers when I let 'em loose.")

The impression of the complex relationship between individual experience, ambition, strength and weakness on the one hand, and abstract, general principles and public conditions on the other, contributes to Hearne's overall achievement in portraying men as men, acting as men, rather than as pawns in some over-simplified theory of how men ought to be. For example, although we are taken more into the minds of the masters above deck than into those of the slaves below, the views we do get of the latter, combined with the variety of attitudes that the former show towards them, constitute a remarkable achievement in the imaginative literature of slavery. It is an achievement without sentimentality.

Through the brief entry which Hearne allows us into the minds of the African women Tadene and Mtishta, what strikes us most is that they are minds, intelligences, not just self-pitying, self-dramatizing wails of suffering. They see their white gaolers and tormentors not as monsters but as strange men whose customs and minds they are trying to understand. And among the Africans as a group there is no monolithic, romanti-

cized feeling of brotherhood and common purpose. To Tadene, the blacks of other tribes lying around her in captivity can seem (almost) as alien as the white men; so that, although, remarkably, their skin is 'the colour natural to all real people', they are still "strange people among whom she has been forced to lie naked, in whose presence she must perform the most intimate functions, with whom she must share food if she hopes to live." Nor does Alex's mutiny arise from selfless notions of 'black consciousness' and black brotherhood. To him Tadene is simply "[t]hat dried-up old bitch [who] is the luck I was waiting for."

However, Hearne's perception of such matters does not diminish the cruelty and pain of the situation. On the contrary, it renders them all the more believable and 'real'. Besides, his understanding of the situation between black and white goes behind and beyond the cruder, obvious manifestations of prejudice to catching how, even the most liberal, reasonable white man will betray, and be himself surprised by, the deep and subtle infection of his prejudice, by an awkward hesitation in mid-sentence, or some other fleeting gesture. In this regard we may note the perceptivity with which Hearne imagines the movement of Hogarth's mind in his reaction to Alex on their first meeting. One is reminded here, as throughout the novel, of the position with which Derek Walcott ends his essay "The Muse of History", when, reflecting on his 'two grandfathers', he says:

You were when you acted your roles, your given, historical roles of slave seller and slave buyer, men acting as men, and also you, father in the filth-ridden gut of the slave ship, to you they were also men, acting as men, with the cruelty of men, your fellowman and tribesman not moved or hovering with hesitation about your common race any longer than my other bastard ancestor hover-

ed with his whip . . . [Orde Coombs (ed.) *Is Massa Day Dead*, N.Y. 1974].

The 20 years which Hearne kept his readers waiting since his last previous novel were, like the long wait of the *Sure Salvation*, and despite the fate of the ship, not in vain.

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MONICA SCHULER'S "ALAS, ALAS, KONGO"

By Mavis Campbell

Monica Schuler, "Alas, Alas, Kongo": A Social History of Indentured African Immigration into Jamaica, 1841-1865, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980. 109pp., \$16.50.

Indenture, as a form of labour to satisfy the labour needs of the Caribbean slave societies is fairly well known — even popularly — and the subject cannot be said to be neglected by historians. But the reflex action to this word, within the Caribbean context, is invariably white or Asian indenture: the one at the inception of the plantation economy, the other, upon the formal cessation of the institution of slavery in the area. But Monica Schuler has now forced us to take a look at another group of the immigrant labour force — neglected by historians — those indentured Africans who first disembarked at Sierra Leone or on the island of St. Helena before taking the westward route on the Atlantic to the New World, between 1841 and 1865.

These were a part of the result of the British act of 1807, effective 1808, making the slave trade from Africa illegal within her colonies, certainly, and by diplomatic pressures, treaties and naval blockades, within the hemisphere, if possible. The structural arrangement to implement the act saw Courts of

Mixed Commission established in Freetown (Sierra Leone) by 1819 to deal with captains of ships who were still engaged in the 'illegal' trade. After adjudication, the Africans from the guilty vessels were landed at Freetown as recaptives — often in appalling condition — some to settle there and become liberated Africans (for Ms. Schuler has made a distinction between these two words, which were usually used synonymously, p.5n), others to await transshipment elsewhere. Upon emancipation of slavery in the British colonies in 1834, Sierra Leone thus had some 27 years' experience both as a depot and settlement colony for contraband Africans.

Emancipation brought loud and vexed cries of shortage of labour from the plantocracy and they looked — assisted financially by the British government, in some cases — to different parts of the world to satisfy their need for this resource. From Europe they obtained some, mainly Scots, Irish and a few Germans; from the Atlantic island of Madeira they obtained some Portuguese, most of whom went to British Guiana (Guyana); but it was from Asia, particularly India, that they acquired their main supply of indentured workers, thus adding to the racial heterogeneity of the area.

But there were some African indenture too, coming, as we saw, from Sierra Leone and St. Helena. The first group, consisting of Liberated Africans, landed in Jamaica in 1841 under the aegis of the enterprising Alexander Barclay, Commissioner of Immigration for Jamaica, and these can certainly be said to have arrived voluntarily and under more or less fair conditions. Theoretically, they were promised free passage, "and on landing to be at perfect liberty to engage themselves in the plantation villages to whomever they like, offering them the best wages" (p.13). The contract was for one year, with "perfect freedom to remain in the island or leave it if they wished", and they were to be paid the going wage

rates of the colony, from 1s.6d a day, or from 2s to 4s to be made working by the 'piece of job'. The success of the first shipment was not to continue and the energetic campaign of the Commissioner to move the Sierra Leonians away from their homeland to Jamaica was not a success. Jamaica was not the paradise the propaganda of the immigration officer was promulgating. "Erected on bad faith, misunderstanding, and unsound economics, the high hopes surrounding the first voyage were bound to be dashed. Perhaps the only surprising thing is the rapidity with which this occurred" (p.18).

But this little difficulty was not to obstruct the labour needs of the planter class and Lord Russell's 'principle' could now be effectuated. Russell had declared that the Africans who landed at Sierra Leone should not all be expected to remain there but at the expiration of three months, they should be given three choices: they should show that they were in a state to maintain themselves 'on the spot', or signify their consent to emigrate to the West Indies or leave the colony — destination not stated. This was cruel enough for adults and yet it soon became applicable for children, making the 'choices' enlistment into the army, emigration or self-support on the spot. Many orphans had landed from slave ships and these children under the age of 13, and under 12 after 1844, were entitled to be educated in the colony while those from 9 to 13 were apprenticed to 'respectable' families in Sierra Leone. And it was in 1844 that the British government gave these orphans over 12 years old the specious 'choices'. Emigration officers now became predators on these schools and one of them saw these institutions as 'school farms', or 'wholesome nurseries of labourers', from which could be acquired 'a never-ceasing flow of young emigrants'. If we were shocked by this, Ms. Schuler reminds us that this was not unique, for the British government had, in this same century, permitted the transportation of British orphans to

Cape Colony and Canada.

When we recall that the slave trade did not end — despite British efforts, criticized invariably as feeble and ineffectual — until during the 1860s, then we may get a better picture of the duration of involuntary labour, a large proportion of which consisted of children from 1843. Both children and adults resisted, as much as they could, leaving the country, some

were prone to flee to the bush when emigration recruiters approached their villages. Recruiting among the newcomers in the Queen's Yard, [called King's Yard when a male was on the British throne] therefore, was not simply a matter of inviting people to travel to the West Indies; it called instead for subterfuge, duplicity, and, if necessary force. It became standard practice to isolate new arrivals from all except West India Regiment and plantation recruiters, and recaptives could be detained in the Queen's Yard for one to three months awaiting the arrival of an emigrant ship (pp. 25-6).

The unusual title of this little book, reminiscent more of an imaginative work — a novel or a poem — than a scholarly one, did not reveal its meaning until more than half way through, at page 74. "*Alas, Alas, Kongo*" is the plaintive cry of a people, through song — not unlike the Negro Spirituals — who, alas, for the most part, did not travel to Jamaica voluntarily, and would wish to return to their homeland. This is nothing new to the island. More than 90 per cent of its people went there involuntarily, but the difference in this case, is that this category under study was supposed to have been contracted to work for a stipulated period of time and they thought that their contracts offered them free return passage to Africa — as was offered the Asian. But for the Africans, Sisyphean progeny, there was no such luck.

The nature of the society these Africans were to enter is of immense importance to an understanding of their future adjustment. A pyramidal social structure consisting of a few ex-slave masters at the top, with their ideology of white

supremacy and close behind — the half-breeds, their illegitimate children, whose ideology of race was not one whit different. In fact they exploited the African workers as much as any white — and this does not exclude even the 'radical' George William Gordon. I am grateful to Ms. Schuler for pointing out (n. 1, p.135) that I may have been too sympathetic to Gordon in my *Dynamics of Change* . . . , "accep[ting] the general view of Gordon as 'a disinterested champion of the oppressed workers of Jamaica' ". She showed that, in fact, Gordon was "just as eager as any European planter to profit from cheap African labor . . . [treating them] every bit as shabbily as European planters did [and] in 1849 and 1850 neglecting to pay them wages". It is not that I *accepted* a general view, for the work is a critical one; it is rather that I gave much too favourable an interpretation to a politician's articulation, leaning too heavily on the *Jamaican Parliamentary Debates*, where Gordon was playing to the gallery.

At the bottom of the pyramid was the large emancipated group, now socialized to an extent, within the normative values of the ruling class, and strongly inclined to put on airs on the newly arrived Africans — as happened under slavery. Thus, adjustment in such a society might have been difficult to the indentured Africans. But, using religion — African with additives from Christianity — as a unifying force among themselves, they established their own communities from which they could draw spiritual and psychological sustenance to deal with a harsh and unsympathetic social environment. True, in the course of time they became enmeshed with the black community in Jamaica through marriage and common interests.

The only other work, as far as I know, that deals with the subject of indentured Africans in Jamaica after Emancipation is *Jamaica and Voluntary Laborers from Africa, 1840-1866* by Mary Elizabeth Thomas (Gainsville:

The University Presses of Florida, 1974). Yet, although the two authors deal with the same period (only a difference of one year) they are two different books. Ms. Thomas's could well be more appropriately titled, "British or Colonial Policy to Jamaica's Immigration Problems . . ." and one is bound to wonder how she could use the word 'voluntary' in her title in the light of Ms. Schuler's findings. In reading Ms. Schuler's work, and in contemplating the resilience of African culture, one is immediately reminded of John Peterson's *Province of Freedom*, another work which demonstrated African creativity and adaptability to difficult conditions, in this case, within Sierra Leone.

One would have wished Ms. Schuler to have mentioned whether or not there was any interaction between the African and the Asian indentured immigrants, and whether the planters had tried to play one group against the other to depress wages as they did in Guyana.

"*Alas, Alas, Kongo*", is a very important contribution to the social history of Jamaica, as well as to the genre of Afro-Caribbean linkage, showing that in dealing with African 'retentions' in the area we should also look beyond slavery, raising questions such as why the heavy concentration of 'Africanism' in certain areas, and not to the same extent in others. It is to be hoped that others of the same nature will soon follow, not only from the British territories such as Trinidad and Guyana, Grenada, etc., which also received indentured Africans, but also on those who went to Cuba — *emancipados* — as slaves, during the same period.

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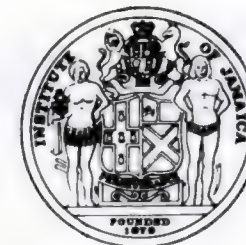
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Black American Quilts

An Artistic Craft

By Mary Twining



Bedspread in strip quilt style by Mrs. Janie Hunter, Johns Island, South Carolina, U.S.A. (note repeated Shango axe design).

Mary Twining's research for this article was undertaken in the Sea Islands which are located along the coasts of South Carolina and Georgia, U.S.A. Some of the islands are now connected to the mainland by bridges and causeways, but their isolation up to recently has helped to preserve a unique culture. Although Sea Islanders are native to the United States, they "actually manifest in their speech, customs and general manner of life, features which show greater affinities to the Afro-Caribbean populations and to indigenous African peoples than do other Americans of African origin".

The original population of African-descent arrived with plantation owners from Barbados and other Caribbean islands in the 17th century. Their descendants are inheritors of a culture of distinctive character, including their local creole language, Gullah.

Introduction

Quilting is regarded as a peculiarly American accomplishment in domestic arts and crafts. It did, however, come originally from England and Holland in some form familiar to early colonists. Economic necessity was one factor that caused the housewives of earlier times to use every piece of valuable material no matter how small, as even the tiniest of sewing scraps can be used in a carefully pieced quilt.

Another factor frequently touched upon is the necessity for some aesthetic expression in the satisfaction of viewing the finished product and in the actual process of 'setting together'. A catalogue of patterns was used and designed in addition to the more spontaneous crazy quilt designs. The more material at hand, the more selective the quilt maker could be.

An individual often made her quilt top while at home; then the ladies and other members of the community would gather for the 'bee'. Sewing on quilting frames for the expert seamstresses, cooking for the ladies with other talents, socializing and courting seemed to be the ingredients for the 'quilting bee'. All of these factors: social, economic and aesthetic, are essential aspects of the complex of behaviour surrounding the making of bed covers.

The literature on quilting seems to fall into at least two categories, first and foremost the how-to-do-it variety which gives practical hints on how to complete a quilt and an accompanying catalogue of various patterns so anyone may begin to use the patterns which have been in oral circulation for centuries. These catalogues are useful for

the field worker in material culture. They can be helpful in understanding persons-in-the-culture when they are discussing the range of quilt patterns that may have been made throughout their lifetime, as well as in decoding conversation about particular quilts which a group may have remembered making.

The second category in the literature is the cataloguing by descriptions and pictures of existing quilts in historically oriented collections. Many quilts were presumed to be of Euro-American manufacture though some were actually executed by Afro-Americans though of Euro-American design. Robert Farris Thompson's forthcoming book on the general subject of the arts among New World African-Americans (Random House) includes some material on Afro-American quilts. Judith Wragg Chase's *Afro-American Art and Crafts* [1971] was the first to cover such a range and filled a gap long empty. Both of these books feature the transatlantic continuum from African to Afro-American folklife in transmission of culture traits and artistic styles. Also, R.F. Thompson's earlier article "African Influence on the Art of the United States" [1969], begins to talk about Afro-American crafts, i.e. to take them seriously and investigate the possibilities that the direction of culture transmission was from Africa to Afro-American and, possibly, black to white.

Some recent books on Afro-American folk art and craft comprise a third category, that of culturally centred collections of folk art. These include the Metropolitan Museum publication [Perry 1976]; Vlach [1978]; *Missing Pieces* [1976] which records the existence of Afro-American folklore art objects in glowing detail; and a book (in preparation) by Gladys-Marie Fry on Afro-American quilts (to be published by Indiana University Press).

Terminology

The term Afro-American delineates the ethnicity of the group whereas the word 'slave' tends to impute culture to a group united only by the oppression of others. Hence, the reference to the African cultural background inherent in the term Afro-American is useful and more exacting in its definition. When referring to the ante-bellum African and African-descent population, the phrase 'enslaved Africans' might be employed. The main thrust of our discussion is cultural provenance from various parts of Africa to the Americas and it cannot be discussed

in political or socially inappropriate terminology. Thompson uses a narrowly limiting stylistic typology, such as Afro-Carolinian, Southern Afro-American and others that differentiate geographically rather than politically. We are concerned with Afro-Carolinian and Afro-Georgian crafts; beyond that we limit ourselves to the so-called low country area of South Carolina and Georgia where these particular items were made. The strip quilts are found in other Afro-American groups; what makes them Afro-American culturally is that they are designed and manufactured by groups of African-descent within a macro Afro-American culture.

Sea Island Quilt Patterns

The ladies who make the Sea Island quilts live in South Carolina and Georgia. The group in which I was able to do most intensive research lives on Johns Island on River and Bohicket Roads. They are so economically poor as to be below the socio-economic scale levels. Social, geographic, racial and linguistic factors of isolation have separated them more from the mainstream culture in the past. On the whole, the area of the Sea Islands still forms a stronghold of traditional lifeways among the Black Americans living there.

Their quilt patterns have a varied range, including some basically European styles such as 'log cabin', 'handkerchief corner', 'step pattern'. These are rectangular, that is, linear, squared-off designs, which are centrally organized. They also have what they call 'patchy' or 'patch' quilts. These are made up of many pieces of cloth cut into rectangular shapes which are sewn together by hand or machine into long wavy strips sometimes running the whole length of the quilt except the border. Roger Abrahams has termed these 'strip quilts' because of the little strips which go together to form the long strips.¹ There are African analogues for these quilt patterns in Ashanti and Ewe Kente cloth [Kent 1971]. Kente cloth is woven on belt looms in strips and these strips, which consist of rectangular design units, are then edge-sewn together. Finding this relationship only begins the task of understanding the African and European contributions to these quilts as a whole: It seems fairly obvious that the quilt form itself is a European culture trait.

Clearly, the design of the quilt tops is our basis of comparison. The colours in some of the Island quilts compare to

those used in the Ashanti cloth. There are quilts, however, which have much darker tonalities and they have analogues in the woven cloth made by the Ewe people which combine darker hues in the same styles as the Ashanti Kente cloth to make their patterns.² The colours in the quilts are warm and cold, frequently emphasizing reds and blues or whites; the receding and advancing colour phenomenon operates here. The artist has taken the best advantage of these qualities inherent in the colours and put them to work in the quilts. The colours red, blue, and white are very important in this culture. The red signifies danger, fire, conflict and passion. Blue is a 'good' colour which is used on doors to keep away bad spirits. White is a colour which makes you good; a colour used in conjunction with solemn occasions such as weddings, funerals and turnouts (which are associated with burial societies and lodges). Not only do you have the affective use of the colours, but they connect to a deeper set of values and beliefs in the culture which have meaning and significance beyond the exciting combination of colours which work well together.

An interesting discovery which has come to light in the quilt researches is the cross quilt phenomenon. For instance, in a quilt by Ms. Roberta Johnson of Johns Island, there is a huge cross consisting of large pink arms and a dark blue middle section somewhat off centre in the whole quilt. This short-armed cross symbol is one that appears often in the New World. Robert Farris Thompson has found short-armed crosses (circum Caribbean area) in South America where reaffirmations of West African culture are stronger and more obvious. In the carvings there, it seemed to play a warning role. (The short-armed cross symbol is also found in the Harriet Powers quilt in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. It is a quilt with Bible scenes made in the 1800s in Athens, Georgia, and shows evident analogies to the Fon applique cloths of Dahomey which are used as hangings. The Dahomean cloths have animals which are very close in execution to the animals in the Powers Bible quilt. She was obviously familiar with the techniques of applique which bespeak Dahomean cultural influence). The short-armed crosses signify a curse or bad vibrations according to Thompson, who found one in the work of a South American carver. The carver's message was — if you don't like my work, stay

away or curses on you! The crosses denote that we are in the presence of evil. The cross is not a Christian cross according to the residents of the island where Ms. Johnson's quilt was made. It represents danger, evil and other bad feelings antithetical to a calm and peaceful life and/or a Christian life. The crosses are often made in dramatic colours such as red/blue or red/white combinations. This shows an interesting combination of hot/cold, good/bad, safe/dangerous; these are the dichotomous predicates or binary oppositions that make up the dynamics of human societies.

There is, however, a cultural factor to be taken into consideration. Roger Abrahams has a theory that Euro-Americans tend to think and react in squares and rectilinear forms in general, viz. the box step in social dancing. On the other hand, the African-American culture tends to be more curvilinear in its world view, viz. the undulating dance steps.³ As it happens, the quilts illustrate this theory very well in the contrast between the centrality and symmetry of the squared-off designs made by Euro-American quilt makers and the curvilinear, uneven, undulating overall patterns of the Afro-American quilt makers. As a total theory of culture differences it might not carry through effectively; it does, however, provide a useful line of inquiry. It is easy to find exceptions to any rule, but here I think we recognize that we are talking more in terms of tendencies of percentage ratios than across-the-board adherence to rigidly applied rules of cultural behaviour.

Aside from the matters of economic determinism, curvilinear versus rectilinear, small or large stitches executed with more or less precision, we have the notion of presentistic and futuristic thinking. Tight careful quilts presage many years of use and inheritance by future generations, the heirloom syndrome, so to speak. The quilts on the Sea Islands seem much more temporary in their construction; many are tacked coverlets rather than actual quilts. The winter is shorter which means they are used less and there is less enforced indoor time conducive to quilt-making that more northerly groups have to endure. Reverence for material permanence is not given undue emphasis in the value system of the Sea Islands. Their scale of values has non-material culture traits at the top, such as music, religion, dance, verbal arts and social skills. Their crafts include brooms, baskets (Mt.

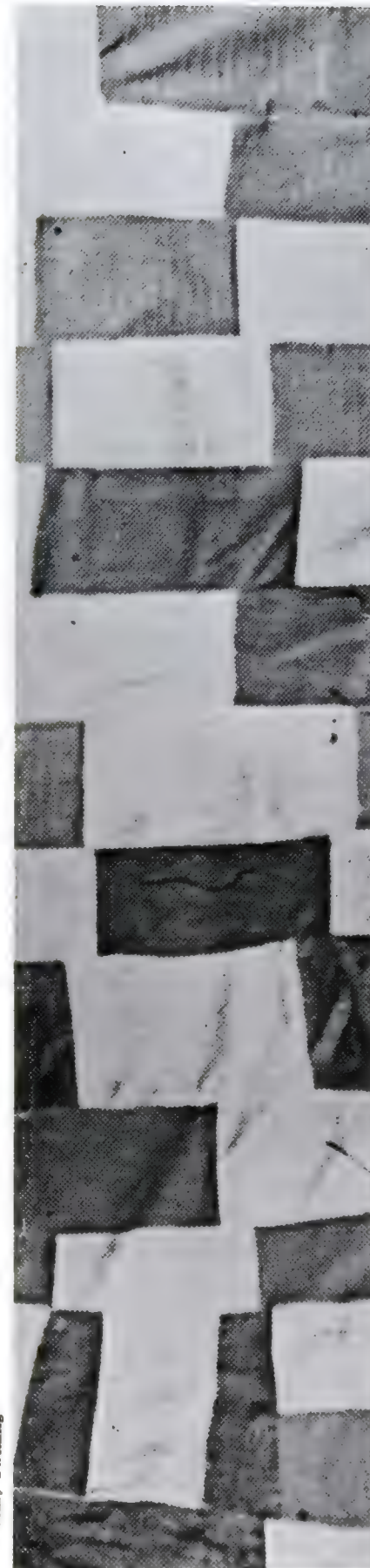
Pleasant), quilts, traditional cookery, fish net knitting, hammocks (Pawley's Island), joint grass dolls (for children), wood carving and iron working. Some of these crafts have begun to die out now that few young people are interested in learning them. The African style iron-work went into eclipse under the impact of legislation in favour of the newly arrived German immigrant workers who worked in cast iron instead of forged iron. Economic, cultural, and social pressures caused some of the crafts to fall into disuse and the only practitioners left are older people in many cases. Life for many Afro-Americans has been uncertain enough so that treasuring material goods has seemed pointless.

Techniques of Manufacture

The ladies in South Carolina use in their quilts any cloth they can obtain — old clothes, sewing scraps or material bought by the yard. They mix velvet, broadcloth, upholstery material, nylon, batiste, twills, wools, rayon all in the same quilt without regard to what will wear well or endure washing. The surface texture is quite varied on the quilts where a variety of cloths are used. Others, however, are very smooth as the material used is uniform in surface interest.

Generally speaking, the technique of manufacture varies with each artist on the South Carolinian quilts. Some ladies take large to enormous stitches running in lines across the whole quilt, some of them 'set together' very carefully, but the results are not square in all cases. The border strips are sometimes wavy and curvilinear on the edges around the outside of the quilt. The edges of the strips making up the whole quilt top are also wavy, though the smaller strips themselves are basically rectilinear. Economic determinism may be responsible for noticeable differences in techniques of quilt making: it is the question of getting the quilt on to the bed in the most expeditious manner which has governed their manufacture among economically disadvantaged groups.

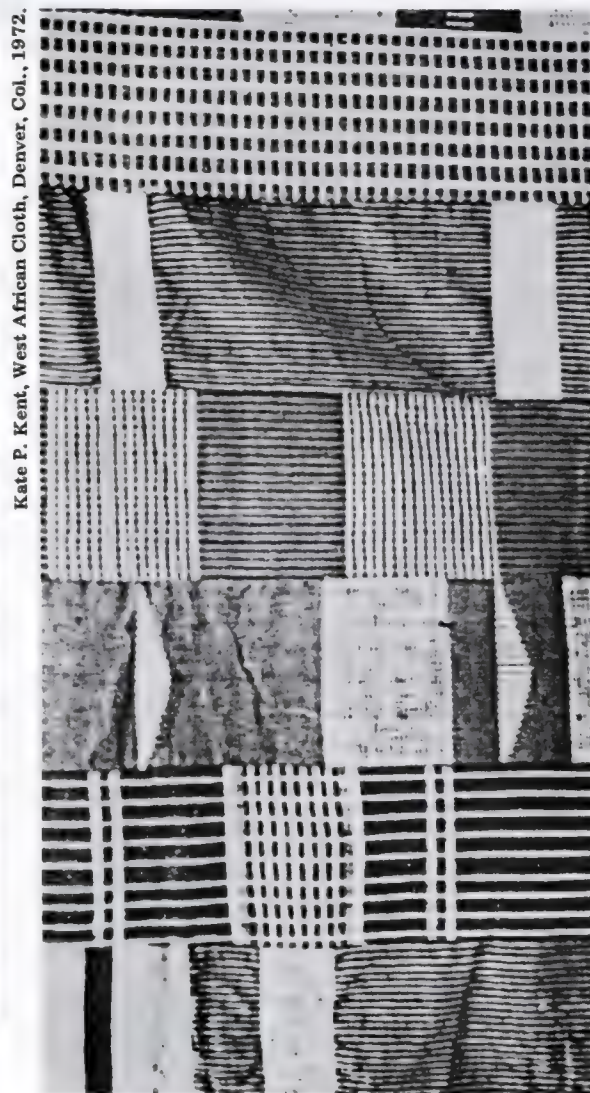
The Islanders quilt for necessity's sake. They gather in groups now, as they used to do, to make a cooperative venture and sell their quilts. Certainly one of the chief motivations of these groups is economic: the pattern might be affected if the quilts are assembled simply for economic reasons. However, in noting the construction in some of the 'strip' quilts, we see the same piece of material cut in many strips in many



Quilt by Ms. Anna Campbell, Johns Island, South Carolina, U.S.A. (detail).



Quilt with large design units (top) by A. Forman of Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina (from the collection of Dr. Phyllis Martin, Bloomington, Indiana), shows similarities with Ewe Kente cloth (left).



Kate P. Kent, West African Cloth, Denver, Col., 1972.



Appliqué quilt by Harriet Powers of Athens, Georgia, U.S.A., 1895 (in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution) is clearly related to the Fon appliqué cloths of Benin, West Africa. (See illustration, opposite).

parts of the design to make the pattern come out right. This is actualizing a mental template, rather than simply utilizing what comes to hand. I think we can differentiate between the patchwork quilt and the strip quilt; the first being the economically determined quilt and the second being a pattern in the mental catalogue of patterns used by these women.

The mini-unit of strip quilting is the smallest strip which with many similar strips makes the next largest construction unit in the making of the pattern. This next larger unit is also a 'strip' composed of the mini units. These larger strips are then assembled to complete the top. Often a border is then added to increase the area or to unify the whole quilt. Sometimes part of the pattern will be a unit from another design sequence usually used in the Anglo-American quilts, part of a 'log cabin', or 'courthouse steps'. This may be surrounded by pattern units more typical of the Afro-American groups and bordered in their style.

The Afro-Carolinian quilts have design units placed according to other schemes of organization which show that the centrality and balance in a four square framework are not of maximum importance to them. It seems possible to project the idea that the design units

move on the quilt surface in a manner which corresponds to the non-material cultural emphasis mentioned above. There are correspondences to the movement in the design in Black American folk music, e.g. the blues, jazz, rhythms, gospel and so on. The evanescent forms of their dance, song, verbal skills, etc., are here caught in material form. In other words what we have here are material culture traits produced by a subculture whose emphasis is basically non-material but nonetheless artistic.

Briefly, I would point out the correspondence in the Anglo-American quilts between the measured even designs and the materialistic emphasis in the culture. Also the analogy would extend to the music of Euro-American groups and the visual combinations of design elements such as we see in the quilts. From a Euro-American ethnocentric standpoint, the Afro-American design is not design or non-design. It is, however, organized from completely different aesthetic considerations and templates, it does not conform to any sense of order but its own, which clearly relates to the African background. The undulating lines may well be thought to correlate with the indirection in personal contact as well as the indirect modes of speech well known in the Afro-American communities.

Cultural Influences

Some quilts made by Afro-Americans are made in the Anglo-American style just as some of the fine arts by Afro-Americans are done in the Euro-American tradition. We are here discussing Afro-American style quilts manufactured by Afro-Americans working within their own tradition. As with other aspects of Afro-American culture we are concerned with a phenomenon known nowhere else — the New World experience. The quilts as a culture trait are European, no doubt, but the pattern of the tops is within the transatlantic continuum from Africa to the Southeastern United States. It is the combination that gives us the uniqueness of Afro-American New World autonomous cultural integrity.

Moving beyond the dichotomies offered by European and African culture traits, we have considered the Afro-American combination of these. We have an example of recent culture contact in some of the quilts from Johns Island, South Carolina. Mennonites have come to live on the island as part of a missionary programme growing out of the Mennonites' convictions against war and their legitimate draft avoidance. Their culture patterns in quilts conform to Euro-American standards that were mentioned earlier. Seeing the quilts of



Applique hanging from Abomey, Benin. Each figure symbolises another meaning that has its roots in folklore and history. Compare the figures with those in the Powers Quilt, opposite.

the islanders and not understanding them, they gave the Island ladies instructions to help them learn to make 'proper' quilts, in their reckoning.

They gave the ladies cardboard patterns so that centrally-oriented quadri-foil flowers could be neatly appliqued onto squares which were to be set together in four even rows to complete the top pattern. Bits of cloth representing the centres of the flowers were to be superimposed on the appliqué and yet another smaller piece of cloth for the stamens placed on top of that. The result is frozen culture shock. In one example, three of the four rows are fairly well lined up but in the next one, the whole plan of the Mennonite girls has gone astray and the culture of Johns Island has reasserted itself.

These editings of the superimposed designs from another culture are graphic material examples of culture contact which can be documented in the circumstances which brought them about. Sometimes it is possible to define some culture traits by what they are not, as well as by what they are. Here we have a unique opportunity to see both extremes and the combination and recombination of these traits which express

the value systems of the people who make them and *their* reaffirmation of their African cultural heritage.

In the past the women of the island used quilting frames as the Euro-Americans to the Afro-Americans still do.⁴ Now, however, they put the quilts on the table; they also use the backs of two chairs and, occasionally, a bed. The women often work in isolation. A co-operative has recently been started on Johns Island under the influence of the Mennonites and the sponsorship of the Methodist church and they quilt together sometimes, but the ladies also continue to work on their own. They keep the quilt tops in a stockpile sometimes for years before they get a chance to make them into whole quilts. They leave the quilts to their daughters, but if they get hard use they do not last in the typically large families on the islands.

Backing varies on the quilts; some of them are quilt tops on both sides, which may put them into the economically determined category. Some are backed with a muslin material called 'Sea Island' from the cotton boom days. Rice bags

were used in the past; that material is not much rougher than the 'Sea Island' and lasts very well. Yard goods purchased from the stores in the cities or from modern day pedlars who come around to the remote island areas are also used.

The Sea Island strip quilt top patterns seem to point to the area of Akan speakers in Ghana in West Africa whereas the Powers quilt applique work definitely points to the Fon of Dahomey. I believe this kind of folklife research has implications for the eventual location of origins of African descended peoples. Just as linguists use linguistic cues to guide them, so folklorists can also use culture traits to guide them [Haley 1972]. Right now, we are building the evidence to come to grips with such enormous research problems. It is an interesting and exciting speculation, however, to think that our researches in material and non-material culture traits will eventually lead us in this direction.

Editor's note: In article and captions, Dahomey and Benin are used interchangeably, the latter being (since 1975) the name of the former.

FOOTNOTES

1. Roger Abrahams, Paper delivered at African Folklore Conference, Bloomington, Indiana, 1970.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. See Peterkin [1927] Ch. VIII, "The Quilting"; also, W. Saunders (personal communication).

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Appliqué Art

According to French Anthropologist Paul Mercier:

The most refined products of the appliqué technique come from Dahomey. Cutout patterns, made of materials in contrasting colours, are sewn on a solid-coloured fabric base. It was a royal art, practiced in the capital of Dahomey by only a few families who specialised in it. The finished products were reserved for the King and for those dignitaries who were allowed to use them. The art is now commercialized and accessible to everyone. The most remarkable works are the hangings that used to decorate royal palaces. The background is black, white or gold, decorated with motifs in vivid colours, with red, blue and yellow predominating. They depict royal names, sentences pronounced by the King at his accession and on great occasions during his reign, particularly military occasions . . . An entire pictorial language developed in this fashion. These hangings provide a more complete account of royal exploits than the briefer records presented by the bas-relief in painted clay. Every year, new tapestries were made for royal ceremonial occasions. Applique work was also used for other things as well: parasols for the King and his dignitaries, regimental banners, uniform hats, the hammocks in which the King was carried and his sandals were all decorated in this fashion. It is said that maps of the districts where a campaign was being planned were put together in the same way, based on intelligence reports by the King's spies. Unfortunately none of the maps has been preserved.

Fresh Light on Spanish Jamaica



By David Buisseret

The study of Spanish Jamaica has not made much progress in recent years, although two projects begun in 1981 — the Government of Jamaica/Institute of Nautical Archaeology project at New Seville and the Government of Jamaica/Spanish Archaeological Mission caraval project — will eventually yield a tremendous amount of knowledge in this area. So far, however, the only substantial additions to our knowledge of this period since the publication in 1952 of Morales Padron's *Jamaica Espanola*, have been the article by H.P. Jacobs called 'The Spanish period of Jamaican history' [1959] and the relevant sections in S.A.G. Taylor's book on *The Western Design* [1965]. Here and there, though, small patches of evidence have been emerging, often informally, and it is the object of the present article first to draw such

information together, and then to analyse a map preserved at the Institute of Jamaica, which throws new light on some of the problems surrounding the study of the Spanish settlement at *Sevilla Nueva* — St. Ann's Bay.

The new non-cartographic evidence falls into three groups: buildings, jars and coins. Apart from the buildings found at St. Ann's Bay in 1937 [See Cotter 1948, 1970], there have been at least two discoveries at Spanish Town. The first was in the cellars of King's House, where the limestone foundation-walls date to the Audencia of the Spanish period. This investigation was described by Duncan Mathewson [1972]; Philip Mayes, in about 1970 showed me the hitherto unrecorded site of a Spanish brick-kiln, on the western bank of the Rio Cobre a little way north of the Public Works Department

yard. The bricks associated with it were clearly of the Spanish type, but it lay right on the edge of the cliff above the river, and since that time has fallen into the river-bed and so been irretrievably lost.

Spanish Majolica-ware has been recovered not only from the King's House site at Spanish Town, but also from the Archives site there, as well as from White Marl and Windsor Hole [Mathewson 1972 p.5]. Whole jars have been unearthed in at least two places. In 1975, a cache of 14 'Spanish olive jars', of the Spanish period, was found while a toilet pit was being dug near the private Bailey's Beach at Yallahs; these are now preserved at the National Museum of Historical Archaeology at Port Royal. Also in that Museum is a fine Bellarmine jug, possibly dating to the Spanish period, found in 1969 between Fort Augusta and Port Henderson.

Whereas buildings and ceramics are often difficult to date,¹ coins are usually relatively easy. It has long been known that after heavy rains, coins from various periods had been recovered from the river-bed near the Iron Bridge in Spanish Town. For obvious reasons, though, it was hard to know exactly how many and what kinds of coins had been recovered in this place; many are said to have dated from the Spanish period. Better authenticated are two hoards found late in 1976 on Whim's Estate, St. Catherine, and on Sevens Estate, Clarendon [Barker 1978, 1979]; these collections of copper coins were no doubt buried by the Spaniards.

None of these minor finds of buildings, ceramics or coins is out of line with what we know of the Spanish occupation of Jamaica. The southern plains sustained a number of ranches (Sevens, Whim's, White Marl and Yallahs), and it is not surprising that we find artifacts either on them or near Spanish Town and St. Ann's Bay (Windsor Hole). Much, though, remains to be known about all these sites, and indeed about the Spanish occupation in general. It is hoped that the present archaeological programmes at New Seville and the archival research in Spain will add greatly to the knowledge available.

One neglected source of information is the so-called 'survey maps' at the Institute of Jamaica. They are arranged by parish, and the 18th-century maps of St. Thomas, for instance, frequently note a Spanish tavern at Yallahs (opposite the present Anglican church), and a Spanish bridge on the plain near Cow Bay. There is no doubt that a systematic examination of these early maps — coupled with archaeological investigation on the ground — would increase our knowledge about Spanish structures, which until now has been limited to Spanish Town, St. Ann's Bay and parts of the north coast.

One of these maps is particularly interesting for the information which it yields about the Spanish settlement at *Sevilla Nueva*, the early 16th-century Spanish site popularly known as 'Seville', near St. Ann's Bay. This map was drawn in September 1792 for George Gairden, and shows 'Seville plantation', which then belonged to the heirs of Samuel Heming. The Heming family had long occupied the site, as may be seen from the map of about 1700 reproduced at the end of C.S. Cotter's article on 'Sevilla Nueva' [1970]. But whereas this early map is partially an oblique view, without any pretension to close accuracy, the map of 1792 shows every sign of having been drawn with great care; there are for instance dots at points along certain boundaries to show where the surveyor's chain was run out. Unfortunately it is very battered, and so hard to reproduce.² Plate 1 was

REVIVAL CULTS IN JAMAICA

By Edward Seaga



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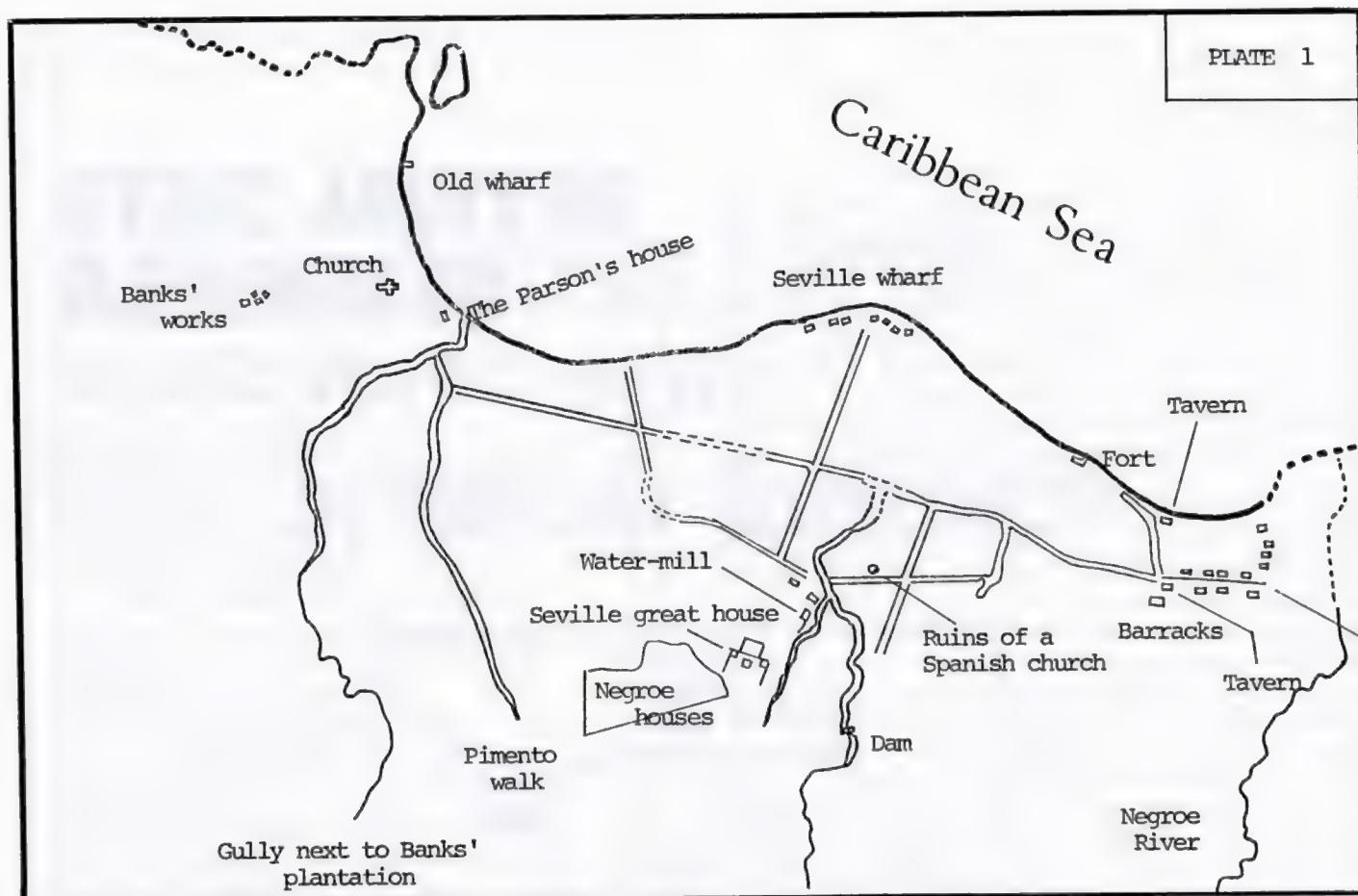
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therefore prepared to show the map's principal features; this plate is an accurate tracing of its main outlines, and includes as well its building-sites and place-names. It has been oriented to the north; the original has the south (roughly) at the top.

The general outline of the area is easy to discern, particularly if we read this map in conjunction with the view of 1700. To the north is of course the sea; the 1700 map shows the enclosing reef, but our 1792 version, which is primarily an estate-map, omits that. A little way inland is the main east-west road, running from the barracks in the east to the parson's house in the west, a distance of about a mile and a quarter. Three rivers snake down from the hills, and two of them are named. Almost in the centre of the map is the cross-roads where the road from Seville wharf crosses the main east-west road, and then runs southwards towards the water-mill. East of the mill are the 'ruins of a Spanish church', and south of it are the 'negroe houses' and the Seville great house. Then away towards the north-west are the 'parson's house', the church, and 'Banks' works'.

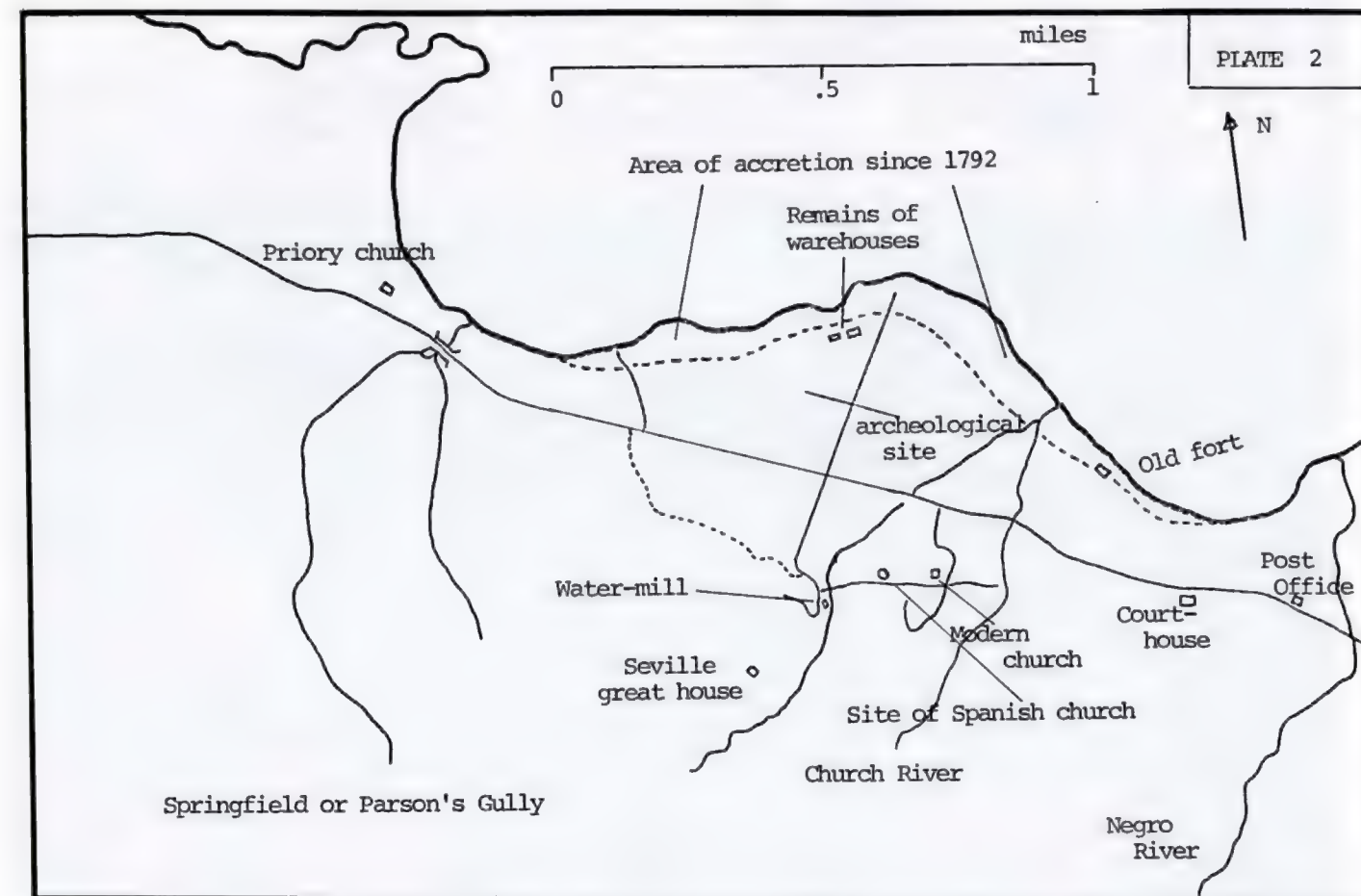
In order to analyse this map, we have to compare it closely with a modern map of the same area, in this case the one drawn by the Survey Department about 1970 at 1:12,500. As it happened, my photographic print of the 1792 map was scaled at 1:12,940, so that only a relatively small adjustment was necessary on the Plan-Variograph to bring the two maps into the same scale. Plate 2 reflects this adjustment, which was carried out using Seville great house, the cross-roads, and the north-western church as the reference-points.

It will be noticed that in many respects the maps fit together very closely; in particular, the line of the roads meeting at the cross-roads is virtually identical, and the lines

of the river-beds correspond closely. The name of the 'Negro River' has remained unchanged, and it is easy to see from the 1792 map why 'Church River' and 'Parson's Gully' have been so named. The court-house now occupies the approximate site of the barracks, and the southern tavern could probably still be traced by the road. The site of the northerly tavern, which stood by the waterfront, was no doubt obscured when the seaside bypass was built (after our map of 1970), but the fort still survives; after being used as a jail and then as a slaughter-house, it is now in private hands.

In the central area, the great house and water-mill are still easily identifiable, and these enable us to plot with precision the 'ruins of a Spanish church', which indeed are at the end of the meadow running westwards from the new Catholic church (marked 'modern church'). In his article on the church, Father Osborne [1974] suggested that it was an ob-long structure running east and west. On the 1792 map, it is carefully drawn as an octagon, though it may be that by then there was not enough of it left for the surveyor to assess its true shape. The map of 1700 seems to show it as a little square building, but this is probably a conventional representation, without much reference to what was actually there.

To the north of the cross-roads now lies the archaeological site; the buildings here are not of course shown on the 1792 map, as they were then still buried. North again of this site is a feature of the greatest interest, which is that the shore-line has apparently advanced by some 130 yards over that band of the coast. No doubt this is because many little streams constantly bring silt down from the higher ground, and from time to time the Church River floods the entire



site, again leaving a layer of silt. If this rate of advance has been roughly constant in historic times, it would mean that about 1500 the shore-line was about 350 yards south of where it now is.³ It would also mean that the castle was quite close to the shore, and that if the ships of Columbus, beached in 1503, are to be found here, it will be necessary to look for them not by sea,⁴ but some way inland — and some way under ground.

In the north-west corner of the map, the most interesting feature is the Priory church, for the parson's house and Banks' works have apparently disappeared. The church is a ruinous brick structure of great interest, with substantial stones embedded in it. No doubt some of these stones came from the Spanish site. In his article on the 'Spanish church', Father Osborne has already related how part of the 16-century inscription was found embedded in the walls of the old fort, down by the sea. There surely is a good chance that the rest of the inscription, as well as other interesting stones⁵, may be found either in the walls of the fort, or in those of the Priory church.

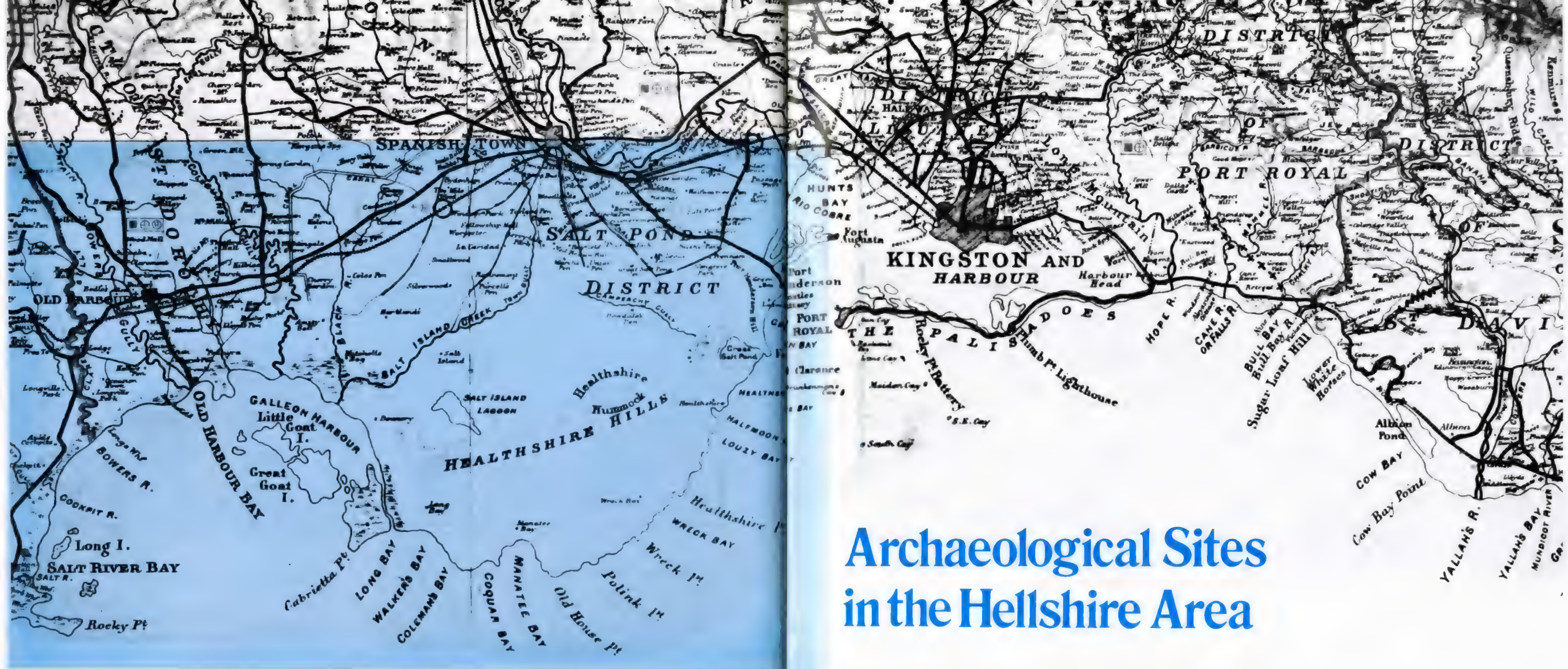
FOOTNOTES

1. This difficulty is well illustrated by Goodwin's book [1946].
2. It was stored in the drawer "Hanover 10", where Dr Higman brought it to my attention.
3. This calculation, rough as it is, gives the same result as a preliminary comparison between survey-maps of different periods preserved in the 'St. Ann' drawer of the Institute's collection.
4. This was where Robert Marx believed that he had located them; see his 'Discovery of two ships of Columbus' [1968].

5. Father Osborne and the present author have written a short survey of the 'Stones of Seville' [1977].

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Archaeological Sites in the Hellshire Area

By G.A. Aarons

The genesis of this paper arose from a document produced in 1978 which attempted to awaken in the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) and its subsidiary the Hellshire Bay Development Company (HBDCo) a cultural-historical awareness of the area slated for development so as not to repeat the destruction of the 'soul' of this area as has happened in Downtown Kingston and Montego Bay. At about the same time, a group of concerned natural scientists were producing an ecological study of the area. Fortunately for all concerned, a positive response was immediately forthcoming from both development agencies.

In 1979 an archaeological research programme executed by the Director of the Port Royal Project (of the Jamaica National Trust Commission/Institute of Jamaica) was sponsored by the HBDCo at Fort Johnston and Johnston's House site. (The reports of these two excavations by the present author, are in their final stages of publication). In the same year, the development of the Two Sisters Arawak cave commenced. The next phase, the model Arawak Village, will follow in the near future. In the near future also, a Museum of Defence at Fort Johnston will be developed.

The following presents basic data on all known prehistoric and historic sites on land and underwater and a brief reconstruction of the history of the area, based mainly on these data.

Historical Sketch of Hellshire Hills AD 1200-1600

The area was first settled in about AD 1200 by Arawak groups probably migrating from White Marl via Ferry site, but was never heavily populated within the period. A close analysis of the Arawak cultural assemblages of the White Marl, Ferry and Hellshire Hills sites shows an internal cultural continuity through the various identifiable phases with reference to the White Marl phases c. 3000 BC-AD 1600 and which are very different from the more northerly St. Catherine assemblages at Dover, Mt. Rosser, Mahoe Ridge, Marlie Mount, Colbeck, Mountain River, Byndloss Mountain and Worthy Park. Within the century AD 1200-1300 at least three village sites — Naggo Head, Great Salt Pond and Great Goat Island — have been identified, as well as the Two Sisters petroglyph cave. The total population for all those settlements was probably 200-300 people, subsisting on seafood and small plot agriculture. The penetration to Great Goat Island suggests that while these settlements might have begun as seasonal camps for White Marl settlers, by the end of this first century they were also permanent habitats. This is further indicated by the petroglyph cave; the necessity for a

spiritual repository could only have resulted from such permanence.

This population figure probably held firm until the early post-Columbian period as the cruder assemblages found at the Port Henderson Hill, Rodney House and Wreck Point sites testify. The Spanish occupation of the Passage Fort and Port Esquivel areas in the early 16th century as well as their later involvement at St. Jago de la Vega, is evidenced by significant changes, particularly in the clay assemblages at White Marl, i.e. water jar necks, handles on vessels, mugs and cups instead of goblets and more and more stylized and cruder ceramic typological and taxonomic samples. This too is reflected from the assemblages from the Rodney House and Wreck Point sites. The area was probably significantly depopulated by AD 1550 and the next reference is not until the mid-17th century.

AD 1600-1700

Because of its relative inhospitability, the area was probably little used during this century, except perhaps by travelers going to or from Port Esquivel and Spanish Town via Passage Fort. Shortly after Penn and Venables' adventure in Jamaica, Ysassi, the last Spanish governor and the Spaniards

who elected to remain with him, joined ranks with Juan de Bolas (Lubolo), the famous Maroon chieftain, to harass the early English attempts at colonization between AD 1655-65 and were particularly active in the Spanish Town area. It is also recorded that Ysassi used to spy on the operations at Port Royal from a vantage point in the Hellshire Hills in order to send intelligence information to the Viceroy in Santo Domingo. It is probable, therefore, that a Spanish camp was established in the area to act as a way-station between the main camps in north-east Clarendon and the ports in south-western and south-eastern St. Catherine as well as the developing Spanish Town settlement [Taylor 1965].

AD 1700-1800

The repopulation of the Hellshire Hills area did not come about until after the 1721/22 hurricane which finally sealed Port Royal's fate as the major Jamaican city [Pawson and Buisseret 1975] and when Spanish Town and its environs began to be developed. Indeed, the first settlements of any note do not date before 1740. But by 1752, Fort Augusta, the Apostles' Battery, Ramage's Old House, Brodbelt's and Ridley's had probably all been constructed to further protect

the harbour and house families willing to establish themselves with cattle farms and indigo works on the hardy terrain.

By 1790, Rodney's Lookout and House, Port Henderson village and naval station, Green Castle, Fort Clarence, Drudge's Folly, Fort Johnston, Johnston's House, Fort Small, Morris's, Walker's, the Hunt's Bay settlement, Lime Kilns, Deans Settlement, Harvey's wharf and house, Hay's and the Little Goat Island settlement had all been established.

By this time, the area would have assumed a fresh importance with the Port Henderson port replacing Passage Fort [Black 1970] as the harbour for Spanish Town. In addition, the protective grid-iron of six forts suggests that the interests invested in cattle farming, indigo works, salt works and agriculture, as well as other industries were significant. The 18th century was the period of Jamaica's great importance and pre-eminence in sugar production, and by this time the slave trade and slavery in Jamaica was at its zenith. The population of the area probably numbered some 400 full-time military personnel [Campbell, Map], some 2,000 Europeans, and probably at least as many Africans in bondage. However, by 1774 there were also free slave settlements as attacks against them by the British militia with Maroon help were recorded.

AD 1800-1900

The declining importance of Spanish Town and the increasing importance of the growing Kingston settlement and port together with the emancipation exercise of 1834 probably sounded the death knell for Hellshire Hills as an important settlement area and of Port Henderson as a port. Indeed, in the 19th century the only known construction of significance in the area was the building of Fort Deanery in c.1800 and the salt works at Wreck Point. The earthquake in 1907 and hurricanes in 1812, 1818, 1822, 1843, 1851, 1873, 1880 and 1887 all did fair to extensive damage in the area and probably prevented restoration of the region to anything approaching its 18th century vitality.

Location of Study Area

The area covered in this paper spans roughly 100 square miles of marine and terrestrial deposits. It is therefore almost twice as large as the area known as Hellshire Hills which comes under the aegis of the Hellshire Bay Development Company Ltd. It may, for the purposes of this paper, be divided into three geographical zones:

Zone One — Port Henderson Zone: A rough triangle c.20 square miles bordered by Dawkins Pond at one apex, to the east, Green Bay to the south and the northernmost meander of Salt Island Creek to the west.

Zone Two — Hellshire Hills Zone: All the area south of Salt Island Creek, including the two Goat Islands, i.e. from Green Bay in the east to the junction of Salt Island Creek and Black River to the west, and Green Bay to Galleon Harbour to the west; approximately 55 square miles.

Zone Three — Marine Zone: A marine area c. 25 square miles bounded by Green Bay to the north, Needles Cay at south centre and Careening Cay to the east.

The list of sites which follows will be divided according to these zones where possible; any whose location is still obscure

will be so described and will be provisionally placed in what appears to be the most appropriate zone, based on the known data.

List of Sites

Prehistoric: Arawak Zone One

I Port Henderson Hill Sites

Several middens were discovered by R.R. Howard in 1948 [Howard 1950] behind the ruins of the 18th century Port Henderson. On this low lying ridge with heavy scrub vegetation and large limestone formations, were found middens about a mile from the coastline and approximately a mile to the northwest of the historic town. The ridge top allows a fine view of Kingston harbour. The deposits were mainly thickly scattered with one complex cluster in a latter day artificial depression which was, in places, 18" thick.

The artifactual materials included:

- (a) Strombus shells with holes in their lips
- (b) Sharp pointed awls/picks made from conch shells
- (c) Low percentage of ceramics which were generally crude with a high marl content. The types found included:
 - 1. Plain wares with flowering tipped handles
 - 2. Rim sherds with dot incision
 - 3. Large griddle fragments
- (d) Large quantity of madrepore coral fragments with little sign of utilization
- (e) Two rough greenstone celts
- (f) A few flint chips

Store: IJ/White Marl

Date: Early 16th Century A D

Interpretation: Small village site occupied relatively briefly. The general crudeness of the assemblage suggests the typical cultural disruption caused by Spanish incursion, but a pre-A D 1530 date is implied as the absence of round handles etc., suggest that this site is probably pre-urban Villa de la Vega (Spanish Town) or the developed Port Esquivel settlement (c.1519). This is therefore part of the early post-Columbian Arawak phase.

II Rodney House Site

Lt.-Com. J. Tyndale-Biscoe in the early 1950s reported a midden-site here, within the near vicinity of Rodney's Lookout, which would make it c.1½ miles northwest of Port Henderson Village and c.2 miles from the sea. The deposits represent a thin scatter amidst heavy scrub vegetation and limestone outcroppings. The assemblage is crude and sparse with similar characteristics to the above. Excavations were done by John Wilman of the Jamaica Archaeological Society in 1978-9 [Wilman 1978] who on the basis of the absence of filleted rims (White Marl Type) proposed that the site was earlier than the basal levels of White Marl. This conclusion is not supported by the present author.

Store: IJ/White Marl

Date: Early 16th Century AD (early post-Columbian Arawak Phase)

Interpretation: Settlement of a few houses with only a brief occupation.



Fort Johnston, Inner wall prior to March 1979 excavation exercise.

III Naggo Head Sites

Various midden sites and a child's burial were located here in 1972-3 by members of the Jamaica Archaeological Society [Lee *et al.* 1972]. These sites are located some three miles south-west of Port Henderson and about a mile north-west of Green Bay, therefore approximately two miles from the sea. The deposits here are less superficial than the sites already described, and although the assemblage could be described as Developed Arawak, the overall character is refined. Among the artifacts were beads (chalcedony, volcanic glass, marble) and one was made from limestone and is similar to that found at the Marlie Mount site. The child's burial was a typical midden or paene-midden burial: shallow, flexed, flattened skull oriented towards the east etc., with no burial goods. This was found in 1973.

Store: IJ/White Marl

Date: c.AD 1200-1300

Interpretation: Medium sized village site, which may represent a seasonal sea-fishing adjunct for the Developed Arawak cultures at White Marl as there is much similarity to contemporaneous White Marl artifacts types. The fact of the child's burial, the size of the settlement and the nature of the material all reflect a fairly long occupation.

IV Great Salt Pond Site

This Arawak midden site located around the north-eastern

end of the Great Salt Pond about one-half mile from Fort Clarence was found by Dr. J. Lee of the Jamaica Archaeological Society in 1970 [Lee 1970]. The site's main character was the preponderance of large marine gastropods which included three species of strombus all of which were perforated for use. The cultural assemblage could be described as Developed Arawak, but the overall volume is low. This site produced an assemblage very similar in character to that of the Naggo Head Site but probably represents a much smaller marine fishing settlement.

Store: IJ/White Marl

Date: AD 1250-1300

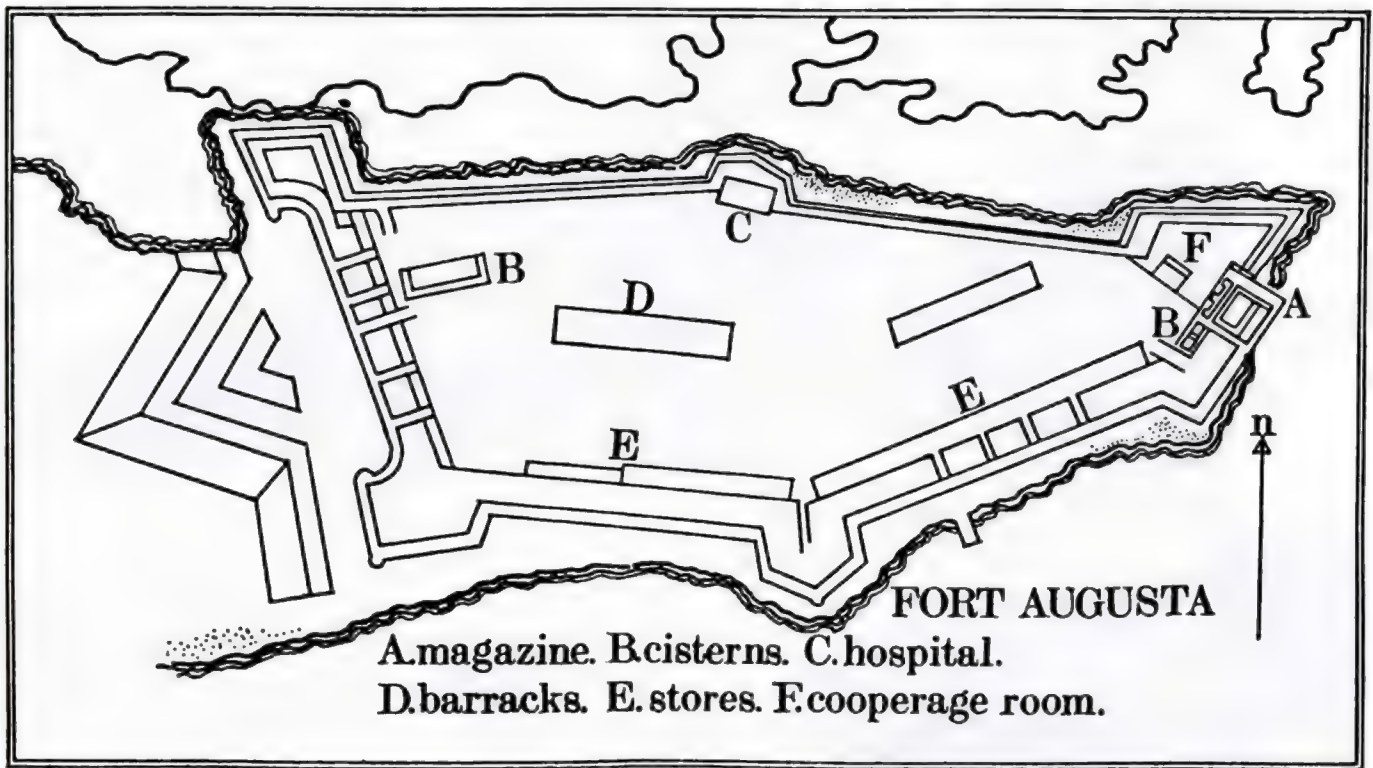
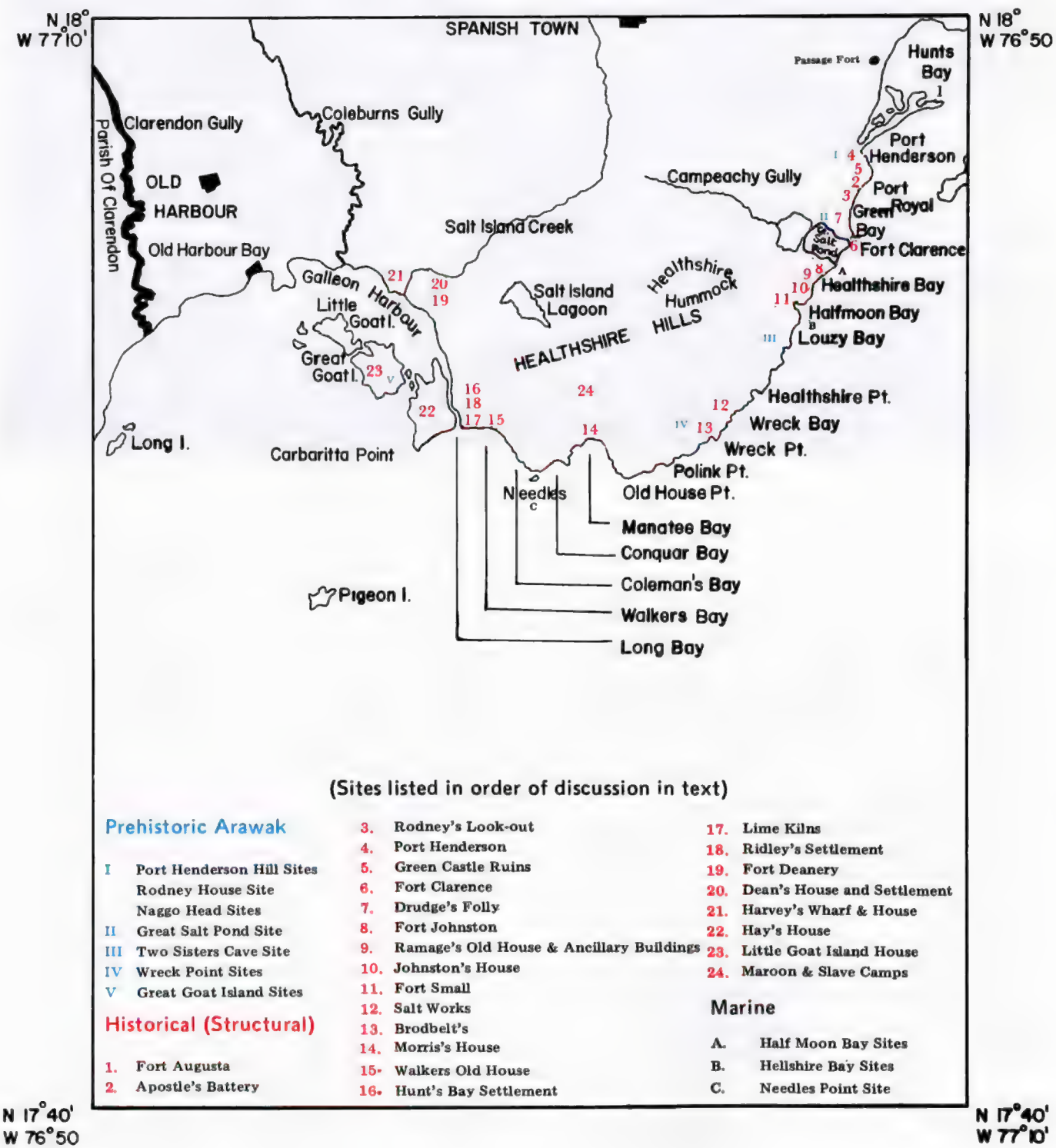
Interpretation: Settlement of a few houses but with a fairly well established occupation which may be a little later than the Naggo Head Settlement.

Zone Two Hellshire Hills Zone

I Two Sisters Cave Site

About one-half mile west of Louzy Bay (Engine Head Bay) is this large limestone sink hole with two cave entrances leading to fresh water. Reported in 1968 by Alan Teulon [Teulon 1968] the fresh water pools are fished with fairly large species of river bass. Within the cave and within easy reach of the southerly or rear entrance is the only petroglyph site yet

MAP OF PREHISTORIC & HISTORIC SITES IN SOUTH EAST ST. CATHERINE



(Illustration by Susan Judah from David Buisseret, The Fortifications of Kingston, 1655-1914, Jamaica: Bolivar Press, 1971).

recorded in the Hellshire area (under study) and one of the four thus far found in St. Catherine parish, the others being at White Marl, Mountain River and Byndloss Mountain. Like all the other petroglyph and/or pictograph caves (except White Marl) this cave contains no cultural material whatsoever. The petroglyph is a deeply incised Arawak adult face, sex indistinguishable.

Store: On Site
Date: AD 1200
Interpretation: Neither the pre-Columbian Arawak phase (c.AD 1300-1500) nor the post-Columbian Arawak phase AD 1500-1600 has ever been found with occurrences of petroglyphs. In the absence of any related cultural material, this site may be dated to the beginning of the Developed Arawak phase, i.e. AD 1200. The face, however, is a lot more figurative than the presumed earlier carvings found elsewhere in the parish.

II Wreck Point Site

About one mile north west of Wreck Point some 130' above sea level Alan Teulon in 1968 [Teulon 1968] found a midden site. This was located in an area of light grass cover on limestone and was spread over several acres of almost superficial strata. The ceramic part of the assemblage was crude and was composed of poor clay with a high proportion of marl. A few boat-shaped vessel fragments and griddle sherds were found. There was an abundance of a variety of shells, including conch and strombus.

Store: IJ/White Marl
Date: Early AD 16th C.
Interpretation: Medium sized temporary settlement which is probably contemporaneous with Port Henderson Hill and Naggo Head sites noted above. Early post-Columbian Arawak phase.

III Great Goat Island Sites

At least three sites have been noted on this island: two midden sites which may actually be the same occurrence and a cave site. Midden site No. 1 is reported in Duerden [1897]; this is shown on a map of the island. No other information is given. Midden site No. 2 was reported by C.B. Lewis in the late 1940s on the south west side of this coral island some 150' up the slope. The artifactual assemblage included many pot sherds and a large number of griddle fragments. The Duerden find was erroneously placed on Little Goat Island by Philip Sherlock [1939].

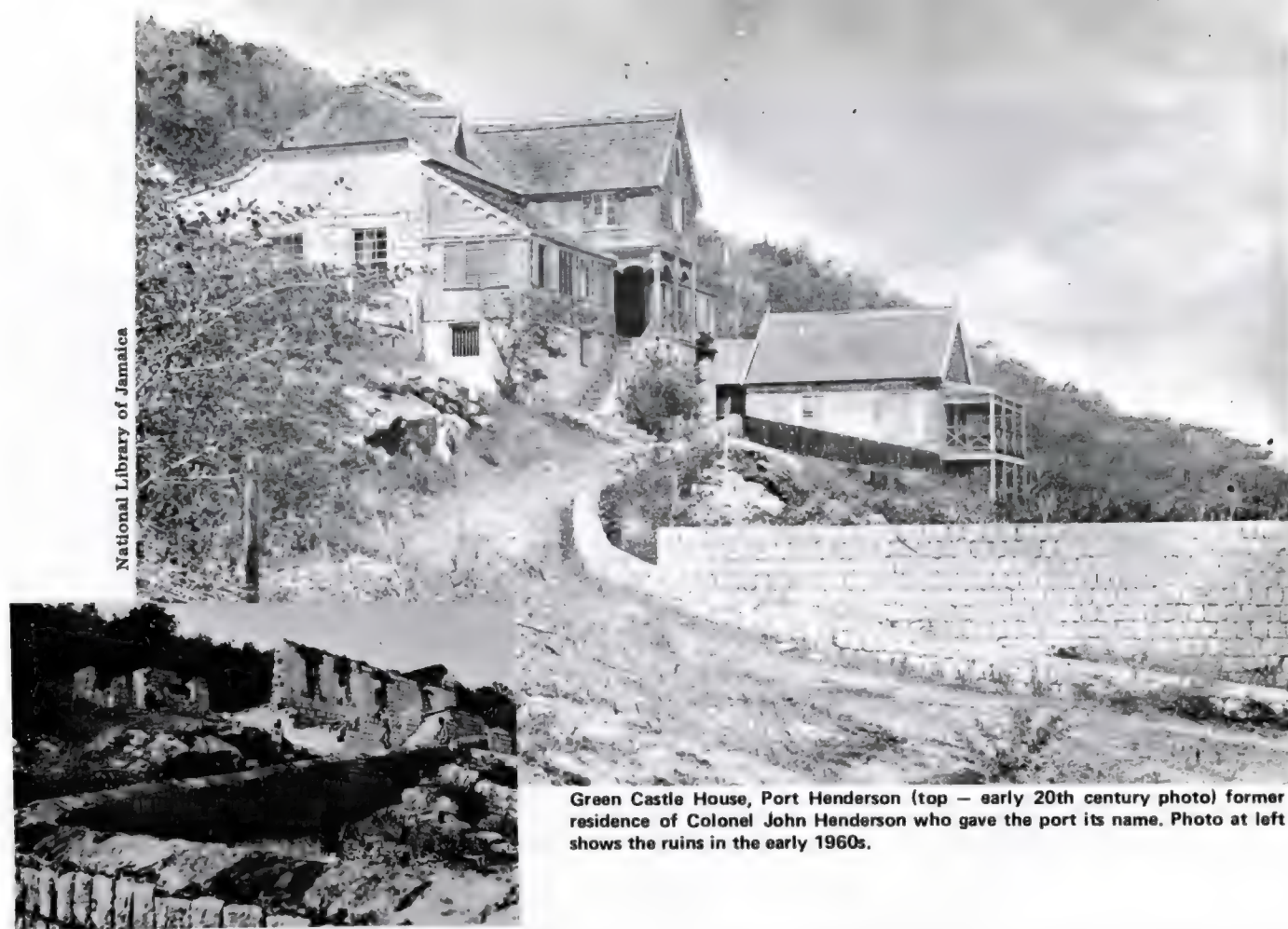
A deep cave was discovered in the 1890s by Leo Verley and is reported by Duerden [1897]. The contents included a large oval-shaped vessel with anthropomorphic decorated lugs which contained a flattened skull of an adolescent and two fragments of long bones. Although there are other caves on the island, a careful investigation by C.B. Lewis in the 1940s revealed no other utilized by the Arawaks.

Store: IJ/White Marl
Date: AD 1200-1300
Interpretation: Small to medium sized settlement which was probably fairly permanent. The Developed Arawak phase is suggested by the general character of the ceramic assemblages.

**Historical Sites (Structural)
Zone One**

1 Fort Augusta

The rapid growth of Kingston in the 18th century indicated that a fortification was necessary for this section of its north western approach. Thus in 1740 construction was begun at Mosquito Point of a fort but this was blown down in 1744 during a storm. Work on the present fort was commenced in



Green Castle House, Port Henderson (top — early 20th century photo) former residence of Colonel John Henderson who gave the port its name. Photo at left shows the ruins in the early 1960s.

1753. On this marshy mangrove-covered spit of land it was necessary to put long palmetto logs far down into the sub-soil to support the substantial structure proposed. By 1755, this structure was almost completed and was able to mount 80 large guns. Maj.-Gen. Campbell's plan of 1782 shows also a navy magazine and a large rampart to the west which cuts right across the spit. Inside the fort itself were 10 structures which housed the fort's defenders and munitions. In 1757, Long reported [Long 1774] that the fort housed 86 guns, a large magazine, a house for the commandant, barracks for 300 soldiers, with additional offices and casements. The final plan was for the fort to house 116 guns. The fort also contained a hospital. On 13 September 1782, the magazine with 300 barrels of powder blew up, causing much damage. Although many of the ancillary buildings within Fort Augusta burnt down [Cundall 1915], their foundations are still visible. The fort has been used since the 1920s as a prison and was taken over by the Jamaica Prisons Department in 1954 [Buisseret and Tyndale-Biscoe 1960]. The fort is listed on the Jamaica National Trust Commission (JNTC) monuments list.

State of preservation: Fair but there are some large cracks on the southern ramparts.

II Apostles' Battery

War between the European powers in 1740 (War of the Austrian Succession) forced the necessity for additional fortifications on the west side of Kingston harbour. One suitable site was a small but steep promontory between Port Henderson and Green Bay, and some time in the mid 1740s a line of 12 guns — nine 42-pounders and three 32-pounders — was erected. The battery is not documented historically until 1753 (in

the House of Assembly *Journal*) but it was probably erected in 1746 when the Assembly is recorded as spending nearly £9,000 on fortification of the island. Later, in 1757, a stone parapet was constructed and behind it, a paved platform. Finally, a cistern with capacity for 3,000 gallons of water was constructed. The cost of construction was in the vicinity of £1,500. The structures were built by Africans under the instructions of the King's Engineer. The Africans in bondage were hired from planters or were borrowed for the job from detention centres or houses of correction in Kingston and Spanish Town. The stone used in the construction came from nearby quarries on Port Henderson Hill. Also called the Twelve Apostles, this battery was manned until 1815. Many of the ancillary buildings were destroyed when a gun emplacement was put on the same site after 1900. The only surviving remains are the outlines of the original paved platform and the small magazines on the hill behind the battery. Various French brass pieces dated c.1740 were removed from the battery by Mr. T.A.L. Concannon in 1972: one is now mounted at Port Royal and two others at Devon House. These are thought to have been placed at the battery by Rodney after the 1782 Battle of the Saints [Wilmot 1975; Buisseret 1967; Martin 1893]. This is listed on the JNTC monuments list.

State of preservation: More or less ruinate but sections are still identifiable.

III Rodney's Look-out, Grass-piece Look-out/Rodney's House

Admiral George Rodney was in charge of the British fleet and naval station between 1771-4. While in Jamaica, he caused two structures to be built on the Port Henderson Hill: The first was a residential house, some 600' up slope

and to the west of Port Henderson village. Attainable by a bridle path, this was a typical Jamaican Georgian vernacular structure with a surrounding verandah around a large central room, with columns made from brick and mortar and bounded by a large wall. The second structure was located some 1400' away, further upslope (c.500' above sea level) to the west. This is Rodney's Grass Piece Look-out, constructed from cut stone and mortar. It was a semi-circular tower with a flight of steps leading to the viewing platform. Both house and look-out were badly damaged in the 1907 earthquake [Cundall 1915; JNTC 1975].

Listed on the JNTC monuments list.

State of Preservation: Ruinate but highly identifiable.

IV Port Henderson Buildings: Rodney's Arms, Chapel, the Long house, Studio Cottage No. 1 and Studio Cottage No. 2 (Two Sisters), and the 'Weekend Gallery' building.

Port Henderson which now consists of six restored buildings, was named after John Henderson, a militia colonel, who was active in Jamaica in 1784. The port was established in the late 18th century as an accommodation for the large ships at the time as the facilities then available at Port Royal and Passage Fort were inadequate. Also called for a short time 'New Brighton', this pleasant port, 13 miles south-west of Kingston and some six miles east of Spanish Town, capital of Jamaica till 1872, was soon developed into a small township consisting of many cutstone and shingle-roofed Georgian vernacular structures (Kidd's sketch in 1848 shows some 18 buildings) scattered on the flat and on the lower ridges of the Port Henderson Hill. These buildings included a tavern (now used as a chapel), a warehouse (now called the Longhouse), an old water police station (now 'Rodney's Arms') and the 'Two Sisters Cottages', summer houses until 1914. These buildings, plus another erected upon sturdy foundations were restored and reconstructed by the JNTC in 1971-5 [JNTC 15].

In 1801, the then Governor, General George Nugent and his wife, of the famous *Journal*, often visited the area which by then had many warehouses, shops and storerooms for the sugar trade [Wright 1966]. Some time later, a mineral spring was discovered nearby and the port also became a health resort and was so used up to 1951 when the cavern containing the mineral pool was damaged by Hurricane Charlie. Stock was also pastured on the nearby hill, and ground provisions grown. At the end of the 19th century, the standing buildings were used as a temporary laboratory for marine zoology by American students from Johns Hopkins University. The 1907 earthquake and the 1951 hurricane both did considerable damage to the area.

The restored buildings have been used by the former Jamaica National Trust Commission as a mini-resort area and a gallery of artwork by budding Jamaican artists [JNTC 1975]. They are listed on the JNTC monuments list.

State of Preservation: Excellent.

V Green Castle (Ruin)

This is located 200' upslope on a ridge of Port Henderson Hill almost directly north of 'Rodney's Arms'. This is a small late-18th century fortified house which is now a ruin as it was badly damaged by the 1907 earthquake. Little is known about its history but it is presumed to date from much the same time as Fort Johnston as the construction and type of

stone are very similar, i.e. c.1787. It is listed on the JNTC monuments list.

State of preservation: Ruinate

VI Fort Clarence

On the eastern end of Green Bay and close to the estuary of Great Salt Pond with Kingston Harbour, this late 18th century fortification was little more than a rectangular block-house which probably mounted less than a dozen guns. This probably also dated to c.1787. Much damage was done to it in the 1907 earthquake but a fair amount of it was still standing in 1915 [Cundall 1915, Aarons 1978]. It is listed on the JNTC monuments list.

State of preservation: Ruinate

VII Drudge's Folly

This is located on the north-west side of Port Henderson Hill. The *Journals* of the House of Assembly for 17 April 1744 note that this property was owned by a Mr. John Drudge. It is presumed that a house must once have been located on this property, but this structure or its remains have not been recorded on the ground by the author. The location is presumed to be one-half mile north-west of Rodney's Look-out.

VIII Fort Johnston

This fort is located on a sharp rise, about 1½ miles south west of Fort Clarence and on the eastern edge of the Great Salt Pond. It was erected on land purchased for the purpose from one Johnston of the area. A fair-sized rectangular structure, the fort mounted some two dozen guns and was probably in a fair state of preservation until the 1907 earthquake. In 1974, in an attempt to remove some of the cannons to Up Park Camp for the Military Museum there, the JDF damaged the fort's walls. Despite Teulon's (following Buisseret [1967]) dating of the fort to 1787 [Teulon 1968], the 1979 research here coupled with further historical review, would suggest a date of c.1750. This is listed on the JNTC monuments list.

State of Preservation: Standing foundation up to original height but much damaged.

IX cf. Ramage's Old House and Ancillary Buildings

Located on a small peninsula between Hellshire and Half Moon bays, this is a ruin of a two-storey dwelling 30' x 20'. In addition, there is a small outbuilding with walls 15-20 ft. high which is connected to the main building on the east wing by a raised walkway and which also has a flight of steps which leads towards a second outbuilding with an oven. This might have been a laundry and a kitchen house. On Smellie's boundary plan of 1783 a building on the same site is recorded as above. Harrison's plan of 1869 describes a 'Healthshire house' and Pomeroy's 1915 Kingston plans refer to a 'Leper's Asylum'.

An earlier reference to a Ramage in 1744 [*Journal* of the Assembly of Jamaica, 17 April 1744] as being involved in an enquiry regarding the property of John Drudge around Port Henderson Hill suggests that this house was established even then. Since the 1783 description of the building includes the appendage 'Old House', some antiquity is suggested. The date of construction may well be c.1740 and is certainly pre-1783. The fact that this house is described as 'Healthshire House' in 1869 and that 'Healthshire' is one of the names



Johnston's house site (left) and a view from the west (above) before it was damaged by contractors in June 1979.

given to the whole area, again suggests that it was well enough known and old enough to be given the same name as the whole area. As Teulon points out [1968], the 1915 reference to a 'Leper Asylum' is puzzling but may well refer to another building nearby.

State of preservation: Substantial ruin.

X cf. Johnston's House

Located about one-half mile north-west of Half Moon Bay, this is a ruin of a small building measuring 23' x 13' with 1' thick walls which extend to 10' high. A little way from the ruin are two stone pillars about 10' high which are 10' apart. This is shown on Gould's map [1772] and on Harrison's [1869] plan. This is indeed a very small structure which may not have been a dwelling house but a tavern or a cattle-farmer's outpost. The two pillars may well be all that remains of a boundary fence, gate, or a cow or horse shed. The excavations in mid- and late- 1979 suggest that this was a small plantation, occupied in the second quarter of the 18th

century with a sizeable slave settlement [Aarons, Johnston's House 1980].

State of preservation: Substantial ruin.

XI cf. Fort Small? : House site

On a peninsula between Half Moon Bay and Louzy Bay (Engine Head Bay) this may or may not be the Fort Small listed by the JNTC. It is shown as a fort on Harrison's 1869 map. Teulon was unable to find it during his 1967 survey [1968] but located nearby a crumbled wall structure of some 30' x 30' which roughly corresponds to a reference on Smellie's 1783 plan described as 'site of intended house'. These two structures may therefore be equivalent if the fort was just a blockhouse or a covered battery.

State of preservation: extensive ruin.

XII cf. Salt works

Located one-half mile east of Wreck Point along the coast, is a stone-wall, around a flat area of approximately one acre in each direction except to the south; the wall is 2' high on the

landward side and varies to 6' high near the water's edge. On the sea is an old deserted jetty covered over by mangrove growth. Outside the east wall are the remains of a concrete barbeque-like structure. Wyld's 1843 map of Jamaica shows a 'salt works' and the standing ruins roughly correspond to this. The best date therefore is pre-1843 but the use of concrete paving makes an early 19th century date almost certain.

State of preservation: substantial ruin to ruin

XIII cf. Brodbelt's or Cushoe Grove

About one mile north of Wreck Point is the substantial ruin of a dwelling house with ancillary buildings and a nearby grove of cashew trees. Gould's map [1772] describes a reference 'Brodbelt's' and nearby 'Cushoe Grove'. Robertson's County of Middlesex map [1804] noted an 'Ogborn's'. A Royal Gazette of 24 June 1780 advertises "Land known as Wreck Bay . . . conveniently situated for the making of white lime, catching of fish and supplying of Kingston and Port Royal with wood. There is on the premises a large dwelling house with a most complete set of out offices, all built of stone . . ." on behalf of the owner Daniel Brodbelt, son of Francis Rigby Brodbelt (1771-1827) medical practitioner of Spanish Town and Member of Council. Although other information is available on the Brodbelt family in Mozley's "Letter to Jane from Jamaica" [Mozley 1939] the house is not referred to. Since the structure is referred to as Brodbelt's one year after F.R Brodbelt is born, it is safe to assume that the house was occupied and/or constructed by his antecedents. A likely date of construction may well be 1740. Since it is unlikely that the area was much occupied between 1655 and 1721-2, the date of the terrible Port Royal hurricane of the time, it is likely that Brodbelt's and Ramage's (mentioned earlier) were among the earliest dwellings established there.

State of preservation: substantial and extensive ruin.

XIV cf. Morris's House

Located on the east coast of Manatee Bay about one-half mile north of Old House Point, this consists of two buildings, one of which may have been a dwelling house, and the other, a vat or a kiln. The Salt Island estate plan of 1779 has this reference and shows a track leading to a house from Salt Island Lagoon. Smellie and Innes's 1784 plan of Deanery plantation shows 300 acres of land at the east end of Salt Island Lagoon as belonging to John and Sarah Morris. Adjacent land is shown as belonging to the heirs of William Morris on an undated portion of a boundary plan. The best date which can be placed on these structures therefore is pre-1779.

State of preservation: Substantial ruins.

XV cf. Walker's Old House or houses

Found on the east coast of Walker's Bay about one-half mile north west of Needles. Teulon was unable to find this ruin [1968 p.2 No. 11]. An undated boundary plan of Long Bay Lands and the abovementioned undated boundary plan both show this; the former mentioned the reference as sited some miles to the west and one-half mile from the coast. A tentative late 18th century date, in line with the majority of the other structures, is indicated in the absence of any concrete fact.

State of preservation: ruin.

XVI cf. Hunt's Bay Settlement

Along the Long Bay coast, inside the mangrove swamps, are several structural remains down to foundation level. Teulon records a number of artifacts dating between 1770-1830 [1968] and that these are at a junction of hunters' tracks marked by a large tamarind tree [1968 p. 2 No. 12]. A late 18th century date again is assumed.

State of preservation: Foundation ruins.

XVII cf. Lime Kilns

At the foot of the hills behind the mangrove swamps approximately one-half mile north of Long Bay are ruins of these structures, probably of a late 18th century date [Tyndale-Biscoe 1965].

State of preservation: substantial ruins.

XVIII cf. Ridley's Settlement

Located one and a half miles north of Long Bay at the foot of hills behind mangrove swamps, this large settlement included an indigo works and dye factory. Mentioned in Tyndale-Biscoe [1965], the boundary plan of Salt Island estate refers to this as Ridley's. Nicholas Ridley is known to have patented 300 acres of land here in 1756 and 300 acres to the north in 1752. The lower part of the largest building was probably used for indigo extraction and processing as there are tanks/vats at different levels and millstones ideal for the purpose. Independent information on this has come from C. Bernard Lewis and Tyndale-Biscoe himself. The structures may readily be dated to c.1756.

State of preservation: Substantial ruin.

XIX Fort Deanery

About one-half mile south-east of the mouth of Salt Island Creek on top of a small limestone hillock surrounded by mangrove swamps is a gun platform with four cannons, one of which has been taken off the platform. A little to the north of the platform is a magazine which is largely intact. Harrison's cadastral map of 1882 shows a fort containing 7 guns; it is not mentioned on the substantive general plans of the area: Gould 1772, Robertson 1804, Salt Island estate plan 1779, Smellie and Innes 1784, Wyld 1843 nor Major General Archibald Campbell's map of 1782, showing military posts. The date is probably then c. 1800 as it may have been one of the fortifications erected during the Napoleonic Wars 1789-1815.

State of preservation: Good

XX cf. Deans's house and settlement

About 300' north of Fort Deanery above Long Bay is a ruined house, the main structure of which measures 70' x 45' with walls standing up to 15' high. This was a large settlement and is indicated on Campbell's 1782 map and Robertson's of 1804. Between the house and the coast lies a group of guinep trees and in an area of c.1 acre are some 20 stone mounds which may be graves. There is a fairly large scatter of artifactual material dating between 1770-1830. Andrew Deans, the owner, advertised the house and property in the Royal Gazette on 29 January 1791. In the *Jamaica Almanac* of 1790, Capt. Andrew Deans is listed as the officer-in-charge of Town-Gully Battery in St. Catherine. A reference to Deans's

Lime Kiln is shown approximately north-east of the house on Smellie and Innes's 1784 plan, and a second lime kiln is shown by the coast on Harrison's 1882 production. As Deans's is not mentioned in the 1779 plan of Salt Island estate, the date of c.1780 is probably acceptable from the evidence thus far unearthed.

XXI cf. Harvey's Wharf and House

Located on the west bank and about one and a half miles north of the mouth of Salt Island Creek, this could not be found by Teulon in 1967 [1968]. A reference is made to this on the 1779 Salt Island estate plan and the Smellie and Innes 1784 plan refers to a property about two miles north west of the wharf. The best date which can therefore be elucidated for these properties is c.1779.

XXII cf. Hay's House

Located on Great Goat Island, about one-quarter mile from the north coast in the centre of the island, this property was not located by Teulon in 1967 but was reported by C. Bernard Lewis in an earlier visit. Smellie and Innes's 1784 plan refers to it, and this may be taken as a reasonable date for its construction.

XXIII Little Goat Island House

On Little Goat Island, about one-quarter mile from the north coast and slightly north of the highest point on the island, there is a ruin of a large house and outbuilding with walls standing as high as 15' above sea level. Some 50' to the east of the main structure is a natural vault or cellar which had been fitted with steps and a gate. In the absence of any further data, a date of c.1790 is not unreasonable, as this is not mentioned on any of the five 18th century source maps for this area (latest 1784) but its general aspect is similar to many of the other structures in the area which can be adequately dated to the last quarter of the 18th century.

XXIV Maroon and Slave Camps 1774 and 1819

In 1774 it was noted that an extensive search was made by Maroons and the militia for slaves known to be hiding in the Hellshire Hills area. No specific reference is made to any site but it can be assumed that these sites would fall within the geographical scope of Zone 2. Gardner [1873], states that in 1819 some 2,555 runaway slaves were at large in eastern Jamaica and that a large number were known to have been dwelling in the Hellshire Hills in 'little villages' from where they would attack European settlements nearby. In August 1819 Major General Marshall in charge of the militia in the area, went with a party of Maroons to hunt them down, with fair success. Both these records suggest that free African villages or camps in the area go back to 1774 and probably earlier and may well have continued through the emancipation period in 1834. These villages or camps were probably located in the elevated hill area which rises to almost 1000' above sea level between Salt Island Lagoon to the west, Salt Island Creek to the north and the Great Salt Pond to the east.

Zone Three¹ Marine Sites

1 Half Moon Bay

Three large cannons are buried in 8' of water some 30' from shore. These are iron and, based on descriptions,

seem to be English and of a late 18th century date. No other associated material has ever been reported but it is possible for the containing vessel to be buried below or in the vicinity of a reef etc.

II Half Moon Bay

In March 1977, a spear fisherman of Greenwich Farm reported that while swimming in the area in water 12' deep some 200' from the shore, he saw a Spanish jar and human remains shackled to the remains of a ship. A rigorous examination at the time was impossible, but it is almost certain that this is a reference to the wreck of a slaver.

III Hellshire Bay

Robert Marx in 1967 purports to have filed a report on the siting of a late 16th century Spanish wreck somewhere off Hellshire Bay.² It is possible that he may be referring to the HMS *Meleager* wrecked off Bare Bush Cay in 1808, although this is some distance away. Passage Fort was used by the Spaniards for mooring their vessels en route to St. Jago de la Vega after 1530 and the area now known as Port Esquivel was used from c.1519 onwards as a shipyard, so the likelihood exists of Spanish wrecks in the area between Portland Point and Kingston Harbour. At the moment, however, there is insufficient evidence to categorically state that there is a wreck, of any date, in Hellshire Bay.

IV Needles Point

In September 1976 a fisherman brought to me a heavily encrusted jar which had a semiglobular shape with a round bottom, rouletting somewhere below the rim and two excised legs with a possible owl's face motif. This he had dragged up with his hook and the exact spot was on the landward side of Needles. The vessel has an Amerindian motif but its shape is more Akan than Arawak or Carib. Rouse's Meso-Indians were a ceramic culture, but neither have they been found anywhere else but Hispaniola, Cuba, Puerto Rico or the Bahamas, nor did they have a ceramic technology. In fact, the motif is most similar to those used by the Chiriqui Indians of the Panama area of all circum-Caribbean Amerindian tribes. It is unfortunate that its context is so obscure, but the degree of encrustation certainly indicates burial for over 100 years.

Zone One Historic Sites — Graves

In addition to all the sites noted above, the following grave sites noted in Wright [1966] are of interest:

I Fort Augusta Prison Chapel

There are 15 mural tablets and wall slabs here, the earliest being 1791 and the latest 1841. The majority of the graves are of military or naval servicemen who died in the line of duty. When the Jamaica Prisons Department took over the fort in 1954, the surviving tombstones in the military burial graves to the west of Fort Augusta were salvaged and replaced on the walls and floors of the chapel with the sanction of the War Graves Commission.

II Green Bay Cemetery

There are two graves left here and these refer to a Capt. Edward James (died 1720) and a Mr. Robert Buckingham (1655-1744). In addition, the graves of Messrs. Lewis Galdy (1659-1739) Capt. William Wakelin (1659-1705) and Capt.

Robert Shorting (died 17—) were removed from the cemetery here to St. Peter's churchyard at Port Royal in 1953 in anticipation of a visit by Queen Elizabeth II.

Footnotes

1. Except where otherwise stated, the references in this section are from personal communications to the author by various individuals and from files in the possession of the former Jamaica National Trust Commission prior to and as a result of its invitation in the late 1960s to the general public for proposals to 'Salvage Ancient Wrecks'. This, in retrospect, set a dangerous precedent and only resulted in two operations, one at Harbour Head and one at Morant Cays.

2. Communicated to Mr. J. Barto Arnold III of the Texas Antiquarian Committee who wrote the present author for confirmation. Marx was an American diver employed by the Government of Jamaica between 1965-8 to conduct salvage operations at Port Royal and St. Ann's Bay. Among other ships Marx has claimed to have found, are a Phoenician galley in Brazil (1951) and the Columbus caravels in St. Ann's Bay (1968). His work at Port Royal in 1965-8 has recently been put into perspective by the joint Government of Jamaica/Institute of Maritime Archaeology (Texas A&M University) 1981-82 underwater excavations. His book [1971] makes no reference to the Spanish shipwreck allegedly found by him in 1966 or 1967.

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For the Record . . .

We'd like to correct the following which appeared in our last issue (No. 46): on p.85 Breta Powles was referred to incorrectly as Greta Poulles; John Dunkley's *Scene with Path* reproduced on p.43 is now in the David Boxer Collection; Stafford Schliefer's Portrait of Alexander Bustamante (p.15) is in the collection of the Jamaica National Trust Commission.

Historic Structures



Old Kings House
Spanish Town Square

Historian Edward Long in 1774 described it as "the noblest and best edifice of the kind, either in North America, or any of the British Colonies". Photographer A. Duperley captured its elegance in a late 19th century photograph (top left) and Philip Wickstead the painter gives us a glimpse of the stately ballroom as it appeared in the late 18th century (centre left). The photograph (lower left) shows Old Kings House today, the brick facade all that remains of the main structure which was destroyed by fire in 1925. Still standing also is the stable block (built in 1780) which houses the Jamaica Peoples Museum of Craft and Technology and the Old Kings House Archaeological Museum (Institute of Jamaica).



Old Kings House stands on one of the longest occupied historic sites in the island, dating back to 1534 when the Spaniards built the town of St. Jago de la Vega as their capital. The Spanish buildings were razed by the English who took the island in 1655, but the buildings they subsequently erected followed the original layout around the Spanish Plaza Mayor, now the Spanish Town Square. Built as the Governor's residence, Old Kings House originally consisted of four main blocks which took forty years — from 1762-1802 — to complete in toto. In 1872 the governor's residence was transferred to Kingston with the capital, and a new King's House acquired in that city.



Glimpses of Jamaica's Natural History

The Water Hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*, Pontederiaceae) is fairly abundant in calm or slow-moving freshwater, such as the Rio Cobre and other rivers of Jamaica's south coast. Native to Brazil, it has spread during the last hundred years to not only the West Indies, but also Central America, Mexico, and the south-eastern United States. Although it flowers profusely in Jamaica, no fruit has been observed. Here it reproduces by stolons (small plantlets connected by lateral stems). It may grow so thickly and rapidly that it can be a serious pest, clogging streams and rivers and blanketing ponds.

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